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A

TREATISE

ON

THE SABBATH.

BY

T. TIMOTHY DWIGHT, LL.D.

LATE PRESIDENT OF YALE COLLEGE, AMERICA.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

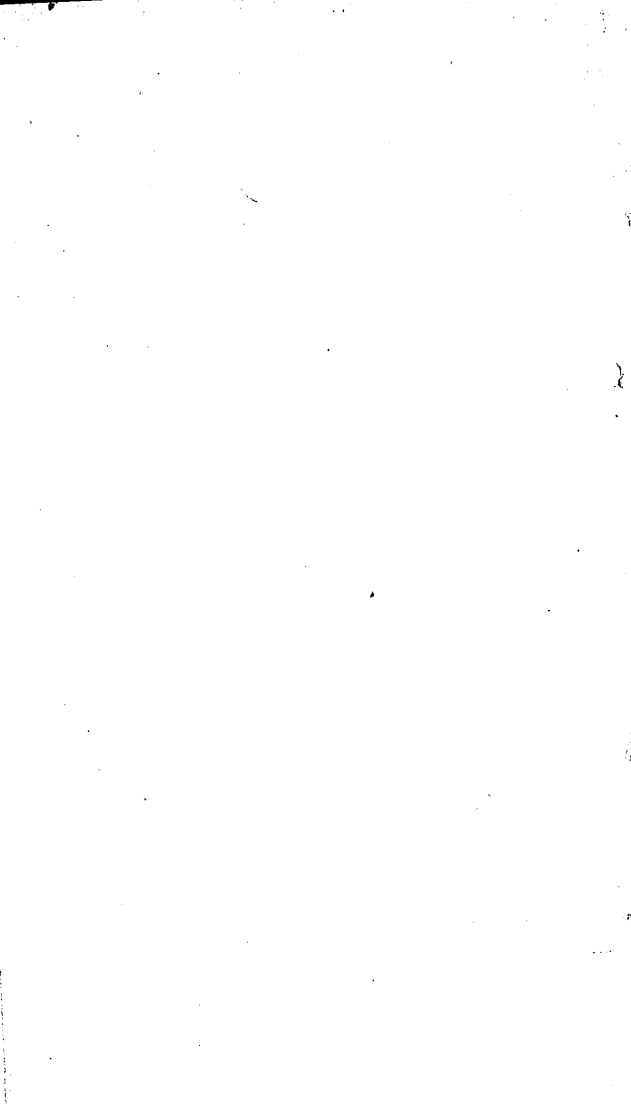
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ON THE SABBATH.

PART THE FIRST

ON THE PERPETUITY OF THE SABBATH, AND THE
CHANGE OF THE DAY.

CHAP. I.

The Perpetuity of the Sabbath.

‘Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man servant, nor thy maid servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.’—Exod. xx. 8—11.

THE command which is given us in this passage of scripture requires no explanation. I shall, therefore, proceed immediately to the consideration of the great subject, which it presents to our view, under the following heads:—

- I. The perpetual establishment of the sabbath
- II. The manner in which it is to be observed.

I. I shall endeavour to prove the perpetual establishment of the sabbath in the scriptures

In the course of my examination, I shall attempt to offer direct proof of its perpetuity, and then to answer objections. In direct proof of the perpetuity of this institution, I allege,

1. The passage quoted.

This text is one of the commands of the *moral law*. Now it is acknowledged, that the moral law is, in the most universal sense, binding on men of every age and every country. If, then, this command be a part of that law, all mankind must be under immovable obligations to obey the injunctions which it contains.

That it is a part of the moral law, I argue from the fact, that it is united with the other commands, which are acknowledged to be of this nature. It is twice placed in the midst of the decalogue—in the context, and in the fifth of Deuteronomy. This fact, you will remember, was the result of design, and not of accident; a design formed and executed by God himself, and not by Moses.

I argue it also from the fact, that this command, together with the remaining nine, was spoken with an awful and audible voice, from the midst of the thunders and lightnings which enveloped Mount Sinai. The splendour and majesty of this scene were such, that “all the people who were in the camp trembled. And when they saw the thunderings, and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, they removed, and stood afar off; and said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die.” Even Moses himself “exceedingly feared and quaked.”

I argue this doctrine also from the fact, that

this command was written by the finger of God, on one of the two tables of stone, originally prepared by himself, and destined to contain nothing but this and the other precepts of the decalogue. It was afterwards written again by the same hand, after these tables were broken, on one of two similar tables, prepared by Moses. A table of stone, and a pillar of stone, were in ancient times direct symbols of the perpetuity of whatever was engraved on them. This very natural symbol God was pleased to adopt in the present case, to show the perpetual obligation of these commands. The remainder of the law given by Moses was all written in a book ; and was here intentionally and entirely distinguished, as to its importance, from the decalogue. The tables of stone on which these commands were written were fashioned by the hand of God himself. This also forms a peculiar article of distinction between the decalogue and the rest of the Jewish law. Nothing but the decalogue ever received such an honour as this. It was written on one of these tables by the finger of God. This also is a distinction peculiar to the decalogue.

When Moses, in his zeal to destroy the idolatry of the Israelites, had broken the two tables of stone, fashioned and written upon in this manner, God directed him to make two other tables of stone like the first. On these he was pleased to write the same commands a second time. In this act he has taught us, that he was pleased to become a second time the recorder of these precepts with his own hand, rather than that the entire distinction between these precepts and others should be obliterated

Every part of this solemn transaction, it is to be remembered, was the result of contrivance and design—of contrivance and design on the part of God himself. Every part of it, therefore, speaks a language which is to be examined and interpreted by us. Now let me ask, whether this language is not perfectly intelligible, and perfectly unambiguous? Is it not clear, beyond every rational debate, that God designed to distinguish these precepts from every other part of the Mosaic law, both as to their superior importance, and their perpetuity? Is it not incredible, that God should mark, in so solemn a manner, this command, together with the remaining nine, unless he intended that all to whom these precepts should come, that is, all Jews and Christians, or all who should afterwards read the scriptures, should regard these commands as possessing that very importance which he thus significantly gave them; should consider them as being, in a peculiar sense, his law; and hold them as being perpetually and universally obligatory?

It is further to be remembered, that this command is delivered in the same absolute manner as the other nine. There is no limitation to the phraseology in which it is contained. "Honour thy father and thy mother," is obligatory on all children to whom this precept shall come. "Thou shalt not steal," is a precept, prohibiting the stealing of every man who shall know it. Every Gentile, as well as every Jew, "who sinneth under the law, will" (according to the spirit of the apostle's declaration) "be judged by the law." Agreeably to this equitable construction, every person, to whom this precept shall come, is

bound to "remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

But it is acknowledged, that "all the remaining commands are indeed universally obligatory, being in their own nature moral, and having therefore an universal application to mankind. This, however, is plainly a command merely positive, and therefore destitute of this universality of application. It may, of course, be dispensed with; may be supposed to have been delivered to the Jews only, like their ceremonial and judicial law; may have been destined to continue so long as their national state continued; and thus may have been designed to be of neither universal nor perpetual obligation."

To this objection, which I have stated at full length, that I might be sure of doing justice to it, I give the following answer:—

(1.) It appears to me evident, that, so far as my information extends, the distinction between moral and positive commands has been less clearly made by moral writers than most other distinctions. It will be impossible for any man clearly to see and to limit exactly what they intend when they use these terms. To remove this difficulty, and to show what I design while I am using these words, I will attempt to define them with some particularity.

A moral precept is one which regulates the moral conduct of intelligent creatures, and binds the will and the conscience. It is either limited, or universal. It is universal, or, in other words, is obligatory on the consciences of intelligent creatures at all times, and in all circumstances, when their situations and relations are universally

such as to render the conduct required in these precepts their duty invariably, and in the nature of things. Of this kind, the number of precepts is certainly very small. We are bound to love God, and our neighbour, invariably. The fifth command, in its obvious sense, can have no application where the relations of parent and child do not exist. To this and similar precepts, therefore, the criterion of universality, generally regarded as the principal mark of the moral nature of precepts, is plainly inapplicable. Limited moral precepts are those which require the duties arising from such relations and circumstances as exist only for limited periods, or among certain classes or divisions of rational beings. Thus various moral precepts found in the judicial law of Moses obligated to obedience none but the people of that nation, and strangers dwelling among them. Thus also he who has no parents, is not required to perform the duties enjoined upon a child; he who has no wife, those required of a husband; and he who has no children, those demanded of a father.

Positive precepts are such as require conduct of moral beings, which, antecedently to the promulgation of them, was not their duty; and, independently of them, would never have become their duty; but would have remained for ever a matter of indifference. It ought to be observed here, that some precepts are considered as merely positive, because the duties enjoined by them were unknown, and would have continued unknown, to those of whom they are required, independently of the publication of the precepts. These precepts, however, are no less of a moral

nature than if the duties which they enjoin, and the relations from which those duties spring, had always been perfectly known. A precept of a merely positive nature creates a duty, which, but for the precept, would not exist; which does not depend for its existence on the nature of the relations sustained by the subject as a rational being; but is intended to promote some useful incidental purpose, and is not due, nor demanded, from the subject in other cases, although sustaining exactly the same relations. Thus the precept requiring the building of booths at the passover, may be considered as a positive precept. Thus also many others, enjoining particular parts of the Jewish ritual.

(2.) The precept contained in the text is, according to these definitions, a moral, and not a positive precept. The sabbath was instituted for the following ends:—

It was intended to give the laborious classes of mankind an opportunity of resting from toil.

It was intended to be a commemoration of the wisdom, power, and goodness of God in the creation of the universe.

It was intended to furnish an opportunity of increasing holiness in man, while in a state of innocence.

It was intended to furnish an opportunity to fallen man of acquiring holiness, and of obtaining salvation.

In every one of these respects the sabbath is equally useful, important, and necessary to every child of Adam. It was no more necessary to a Jew to rest after the labour of six days was ended,

than to any other man. It was no more necessary to a Jew to commemorate the perfections of God, displayed in the work of creation. It was no more necessary to a Jew to gain holiness, or to increase it. It is no more necessary to a Jew to seek or to obtain salvation. Whatever makes either of these things interesting to a Jew, in any degree, makes them in the same degree interesting to every other man. The nature of the command, therefore, teaches, as plainly as the nature of a command can teach, that it is of universal application to mankind. It has then this great criterion of a moral precept; namely, universality of application.

That it is the duty of all men to commemorate the perfections of God displayed in the work of creation, cannot be questioned. Every living man is bound to contemplate, understand, and adore these perfections. But we cannot know them in the abstract, or as they exist merely in Him. We learn them only as displayed in His works, and in his word. We are bound, therefore, to learn them as thus displayed, and that in proportion to the clearness and glory of the display. The clearness and glory with which these perfections are manifested in the work of creation are transcendently great, and demand from all creatures a contemplation proportionably attentive, and an adoration proportionably exalted. To commemorate this glorious work, therefore, is a plain and important duty of all men; this being the peculiar service demanded of them by his character, and his relation to them as their Creator. But this commemoration was the ori-

ginal and supreme object of the command. It cannot be denied that this is a moral service, nor that the precept requiring it is a moral precept.

To perform this service in the best manner is also as much a moral duty, as to perform it at all. If any duty be not performed in the best manner, it is only performed in part ; the remainder being of course omitted : but no words can be necessary to prove, that we are equally obliged to perform one part of a duty as another.

If we know not, and cannot know, the best manner, we are invariably bound to choose the best which we do know. If, however, the best manner be made known to us, we are invariably obliged to adopt it, to the exclusion of all others.

The best manner, in the present case, is made known to us in this command. We are assured, that it is the best manner, by the fact, that God has chosen it. No man can doubt whether God's manner is the best ; nor whether it is his own duty to adopt it rather than any other. This manner, thus disclosed, is a commemoration of the perfections of God on one day in seven.

That a particular day, or set time, should be devoted to this important purpose, is indispensable. The duties to which the Sabbath calls us are social, and such as the rational creatures of God in this world are universally required to unite. But, unless a particular day were set apart for this duty, the union intended would be impossible.

It is of the last importance, that the day should be appointed by God. Men would not agree on any particular day. If they should agree, it would always be doubtful whether the time chosen by

them was the best ; and the day appointed by men would have neither authority, sacredness, nor sanction. In a matter merely of human institution, all who pleased would dissent ; and in such a world as ours, most or all would choose to dissent. The whole duty, therefore, would be left undone, and the glorious perfections of God, unfolded in the work of creation, would be wholly forgotten. This precept is also entirely of a moral nature, as to the whole end at which it aims, so far as man is concerned. This end is, the attainment and the increase of holiness. Of every man living, and of every man alike, this is the highest interest, and the highest duty. To this end, as to the former, which is indeed inseparably united with this, the sabbath is indispensable.

The sabbath is eminently moral, also, as the indispensable means of preserving in the world a real and voluntary obedience to all the other commands in the decalogue. Wherever the sabbath is not, religion dies of course ; and morality of every kind, except so far as convenience and selfishness may keep the forms of it alive, is forgotten. But all those means, which are indispensable to the existence of morality, or, in better language, religion, are themselves of a moral nature, and of universal obligation ; since without them nothing moral could exist.

It makes no difference here, whether we could have known without information from God, that one day in seven would be the best time, and furnish the best manner of performing these things, or not. It is sufficient that we know it now.

Thus the fourth command is of a really moral nature, no less than the others, and as truly of

incalculable importance, and indispensable obligation, to all the children of Adam. Its place in the decalogue, therefore, was given it with consummate propriety ; and “ what God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.”

If it were intended to abolish a command given so plainly, and with circumstances of such amazing solemnity, the abrogation would, undoubtedly, have been communicated in a manner equally clear with that in which the command itself was originally given. But the scriptures contain nothing which resembles an abrogation of it, communicated either clearly, or obscurely. When Christ abolished the *ceremonial* and *civil* laws of the Jews, so far as they might be thought to extend to the gentiles, and taught the true moral system of the old testament, and when the apostles afterwards completed the evangelical account of this subject, it is, I think incredible, that, if this precept were to be abolished at all, neither he nor they should give a single hint concerning the abolition. As both have left it just where they found it, without even intimating that it was at all to be annulled, we may reasonably conclude that its obligation has never been lessened.

In the mean time, it ought to be observed, that many other precepts comprised in the Mosaic law, which are universally acknowledged to be of a moral nature, were nevertheless not introduced into the decalogue, were not spoken by the voice of God, nor written with his finger, nor placed on the tables of stone fashioned by himself. Why was this supreme distinction made in favour of the precept now under discussion ? This

question I may perhaps answer more particularly hereafter. It is sufficient to observe at present, that it arose solely from the superior importance of the precept itself.

2. The perpetual establishment of the sabbath is evident, from its original institution.

Of this we have the following account in Genesis ii. 1—3: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made." The proofs which this passage affords, for the perpetuity of the sabbath, respect the time, and the end, of the institution.

The time of the institution was the seventh day after the creation was begun, and the first day after it was ended. At this time none of the human race were in being, but our first parents. For them the sabbath was instituted; and clearly, therefore, for all their posterity also. If it was not instituted for all their posterity, it was not instituted for any of them; for, certainly, there can be no reason given why it was instituted for one more than another. The Jews, particularly, were no more nearly connected with Adam than we are; and no more interested in any thing commanded to him than are the Gentiles. Accordingly, it is, so far as I know, universally conceded, that, if the sabbath was instituted at this time, it is obligatory on all men to the end of the world.

The resting of God on this day, alleged in the text as a primary and authoritative reason why the

sabbath should be kept holy, is a reason extending to all men alike. In my own view it is incredible, that God should rest on this day to furnish an example to the Jewish nation merely of observing the sabbath; or that so solemn a transaction as this, in its own nature affecting the whole human race alike, should be intentionally confined in its influence to a ten thousandth part of mankind. The example of God, so far as it is imitable, is in its very nature authoritative and obligatory on every intelligent creature, and in the present case plainly on the whole human race. For man to limit it, where God himself has not been pleased to limit it, is evidently unwarrantable and indefensible.

The end of the institution plainly holds out the same universality of obligation. I have already observed, that this is twofold; namely, to commemorate the glory of God displayed in the creation; and to attain and increase holiness in the soul of man. I have also observed, that all men are alike interested in both these objects. Nor can there be a single pretence, that any nation, or any person, is more interested in either, than any other person or nation. Every individual stands in exactly the same relations to God, is under exactly the same obligations, and is bound in this case to duties exactly the same.

3. The perpetuity of the sabbath is clearly taught in Isaiah lvi. 6—8. "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants; every one, that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy

mountain; and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar: for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people. The Lord God, who gathereth the outcasts of Israel, saith, Yet will I gather others to him, beside those that are gathered unto him."

From this passage it is evident, that when the house of God shall become a house of prayer for all people, and when the outcasts of Israel, and others beside them, shall be gathered unto him, that is, Christ, then the sabbath shall continue a divine institution; that it shall be a duty to keep it from polluting it; and that those who keep it, particularly the sons of the stranger, or the gentile nation, shall be accepted and blessed in thus keeping it, and shall be made joyful in God's house of prayer.

But the house of God was never, in any sense, called "an house of prayer for all people," until after the dispensation of the gospel began: namely, until the house of God was found "wherever two or three met together in the name of Christ;" until the period, when mankind were to "worship God, neither in Jerusalem, nor in the mountain of Samaria, but wherever they worshipped in spirit and in truth." Under this dispensation, therefore, the sabbath was still to continue a divine institution; was to be kept free from pollution; and the keeping of it was to be blessed, according to the declarations of the unerring spirit of prophecy.

This prediction is a part of the unchangeable counsels of Jehovah. It could not have been written, unless it had been true. It could not

have been true, unless fulfilled by this very observation of the sabbath. The sabbath could not have been thus observed, and men could not have been thus blessed in observing it, unless, at the very time of this observance, it had still remained an institution of God. For God himself has declared, that mankind "shall not add to his words, nor diminish aught from them;" and that, instead of blessing those who add to the words written in the scriptures, he will "add to them the plagues which are written in the scriptures." But to add to the institutions of God is to add to his word, in the most arrogant and guilty manner. If the sabbath be not now a divine institution, he, who observes it as such, adds to the institutions of God, and is grossly guilty of this arrogance. He may therefore certainly, as well as justly, expect to find a curse, and not a blessing; to be destroyed with a more terrible destruction than that which Nadab and Abihu experienced, for adding to the institutions of God one of their own, of a far less extraordinary and guilty nature.

But how different from all this has been the fact! How exactly, as well as gloriously, has this prediction been fulfilled! God has really "gathered unto Christ others, beside the outcasts of Israel." The gentiles, the sons of the stranger, have, in immense multitudes, "joined themselves to the Lord—they have served him—they have loved his name—they have kept the sabbath from polluting it—they have taken hold of his covenant—they have been made joyful in his house of prayer—and their sacrifices and their burnt-offerings have been accepted upon his

altar—and his house has been called “an house of prayer for all people.” Thus, as Isaiah predicted, there has actually been a sabbath under the dispensation of the gospel, remaining now for about eighteen hundred years; and this sabbath has been attended with the peculiar blessings predicted by this evangelical prophet.

4. The perpetuity of the sabbath is fairly argued from Psalm cxviii. 19—26. “Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them; and I will praise the Lord. This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter. I will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation. The stone, which the builders refused, is become the head-stone of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made: we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord: O Lord, I beseech thee, send now prosperity! Blessed be He that cometh in the name of the Lord. We have blessed you out of the house of the Lord.”

This psalm, particularly the prophecy contained in these words, is explained by St. Peter as referring to Christ; the true “head-stone of the corner,” rejected by the Jewish builders; and, of course, as referring to the times of the christian dispensation. In these times, then, there was to be “a day, which the Lord had made;” not in the literal sense; for in this sense he had made all days; but in the spiritual sense; that is, a day which he had sanctified, consecrated to himself, devoted to his own worship; of a common and secular day, made into a holy and religious one. It was a day on which “the gates

of righteousness" were to be "opened;" that is, the gates of the sanctuary, or house of God; and styled "the gate (or gates) of the Lord." It was a day on which "the righteous," as a body, were to "enter into them." It was the day on which "the Lord became their salvation." It was the day on which "the stone rejected by the builders, became the head-stone of the corner." It was a day on which prayers were to be offered up, and praises to be sung to God. Finally, it was a day in which the righteous were to receive blessings from the house of the Lord.

The reader must have anticipated the conclusion, as flowing irresistibly even from this slight examination of the passage, that this was a day devoted to religious employments, and particularly to the public worship of God. It is equally evident, that it is the day on which Christ arose from the dead, or, in other words, "became the head-stone of the corner." It is, therefore, the sabbath; the only day ever devoted to purposes of this nature by the authority of inspiration. It is a sabbath also existing under the gospel; or, after the resurrection of Christ. Of course, it is to continue to the end of the world; for all the institutions which exist under the gospel are perpetual.

5. The perpetual establishment of the sabbath is evident from Revelation i. 10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

The book of Revelation was probably written about the year 96, and of course many years after the resurrection of Christ. At this time, there was a day generally known to christians by the name of the Lord's day. It was also entitled

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5. The perpetual establishment of the sabbath is evident from Revelation i. 10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

The book of Revelation was probably written about the year 96, and of course many years after the resurrection of Christ. At this time, there was a day generally known to christians by the name of the Lord's day. It was also entitled

the Lord's day, by the pen of St. John, under the immediate influence of inspiration. It was, therefore, so called very expressly by the Spirit of truth. But this could not have been, unless it had been originally instituted by God himself. That the apostle, in this manner of mentioning it, accords intentionally with this denomination, as being the proper one, will, I presume, not be disputed; because the contrary supposition would make him lend his own sanction to a false as well as an unauthorized denomination of this day, and to the false doctrine involved in it; namely, that there was a day consecrated with propriety to the Lord; or in other words, consecrated by divine appointment; since no other consecration of it would have any propriety. If this doctrine were false, as according to the supposition it must be, it could not fail to prove in a high degree dangerous; as it would naturally lead all who read this book to hold a religious institution as established by God, which he had not in fact appointed; and thus, by "worshipping him according to the commandments of men," to worship him "in vain." The guilt and the mischiefs of this doctrine, thus received and obeyed, would be incomprehensible. The Spirit of truth, who directed the pen of St. John, cannot have sanctioned this doctrine, unless it were true; nor have given this denomination to the day spoken of, unless it were to be devoted to God.

There was, therefore, at the period specified, and under the gospel, a day holden by the apostle, by christians generally, and by God himself, as the Lord's day; or a day peculiarly consecrated to Christ, the Lord mentioned by St. John in this

passage. There is now, there has always been, but one such day; and but one manner in which a day can be the Lord's. This day is the sabbath; a holy, heavenly rest from every sinful and every secular concern. It is his, by being authoritatively appropriated to his use by himself; and by his requiring mankind, whenever it returns, to consecrate their time, their talents, and themselves, to his immediate service and religious worship. As then there was such a day, a day consecrated to the Lord, a sabbath, at the time when the Revelation of St. John was written, so this day is perpetually established. For every institution under the gospel, the last dispensation of God to mankind, will remain in full force to the end of the world.

CHAP. II.

The Change of the day for keeping the Sabbath.

IF I have proved, as I flatter myself I have, that the sabbath is an institution designed to last to the end of the world, it will naturally occur, as a question of prime importance in the consideration of this subject, "Why is it, that christians, instead of observing the sabbath originally instituted, keep another day as the sabbath; a day, of which no mention was made in the institution, and for the religious observation of which we find no express command either in the old or new testament?"

This question is certainly asked with unobjectionable propriety; and certainly demands a

candid and satisfactory answer. Such an answer I will now endeavour to give.

It is unquestionably true, that the institution, whatever it is, is to be taken as we find it in the scriptures; and that men are in no respect to change it. He who made it, is the only being in the universe who has the right to abrogate or to alter that which he has made. As we find it then in the scriptures, we are bound to take it whether agreeable to our own ideas of wisdom and propriety, or not.

In order to explain my own views of this subject it will be useful to observe, that this institution obviously consists of two parts; the sabbath, or holy rest; and the day on which it is holden. These are plainly alluded to, as distinct from each other, in the text; where it is said, "The Lord rested the *seventh day*, and blessed the *sabbath day*, and hallowed it." This language is chosen of design; and, as I apprehend, with a propriety, intentionally instructive to us. God did not bless the seventh day, nor hallow it as the seventh day; but only as being the day on which the *sabbath*, or the *holy rest*, was to be kept. Were the sabbath then warrantably to be *kept*, at different periods, on each of the days of the week, the blessing would follow it, on whatever day it was holden.

It was plain, then, that the sabbath, being a thing entirely distinct from the day on which it is kept, may be a perpetual institution; and yet be kept, if God should so order it, on any, or successively on all, the days of the week. If then the day on which the sabbath was to be holden, should by divine appointment be a different one from that which was originally established, the

sabbath itself, the substance of the institution, might still remain the same. All that would be changed, would plainly be a given day of the week ; a thing perfectly circumstantial ; and of no other importance than that which circumstances gave it.

The *day*, I say, might be altered without altering at all the *substance* of the institution. Still it could be altered only by divine appointment. The same authority, which instituted the sabbath, appointed also the day on which it was to be holden : and no other authority is competent to change either, in any degree. If, then, we cannot find in the scriptures plain and ample proofs of an abrogation of the original day, or the substitution of a new one, the day undoubtedly remains in full force and obligation, and is now religiously to be celebrated by all the race of Adam. We shall collect to a point the light which the scriptures afford us concerning this important subject.

1. The nature of the subject furnishes room to suppose, that the day, on which the sabbath was to be celebrated under the christian dispensation, might be a different one from that which was originally appointed.

The end of the institution, mentioned in the text, is the commemoration of the glory of God in the creation of the world. The reason why God chose that the manifestation of himself in that wonderful work should be commemorated, rather than that which was made in the deluge, or the deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, was, it is presumed, the peculiar greatness of the work itself, and of the display which it furnished of his perfections. If this be admitted, as it probably will be by every

sober man, it must also be admitted, that we ought, according to this scheme, to expect any other work of God, of still greater importance, and more glorious to the divine character than the creation itself, to be commemorated with equal or greater solemnity. But the work of redemption, or, as it is sometimes styled in the scriptures, *the new creation*, is a more glorious work than that of creating the heavens and the earth. This doctrine may be elucidated by the following considerations :

(1.) The Agent in both these works is the same. St. Paul expressly declares, that Christ “ in the beginning laid the foundations of the earth ; that the heavens are the work of his hands ;” (Heb. i. 10 ;) and that “ all things visible and invisible were created by him, and for him.” (Col. i. 16.) St. John also teaches us, that “ all things were made by Him ; and that without him there was not one thing made which has existed.” (John i. 3.) The same person, therefore, is honoured in a commemoration of both these wonderful works.

(2.) The end of a work, that is, the reason for which it is done, is of more importance than the work itself. This truth will be admitted on all hands. No intelligent being who claims the character of wisdom, ever undertakes a work without an end sufficiently important to justify the means adopted for its accomplishment. Much less will this be supposed of God. But the end of creation is providence ; and, of all the works of providence, the work of redemption, or the new creation, is incalculably the most important ; the hinge on which all the rest turn ; the work, towards the completion of which all the rest are directed ; in a word, the end of them all. Accord-

ingly, St. Paul says, " who created all things by Jesus Christ, to the intent, that now unto principalities and powers, in heavenly places, might be known, by the church, the manifold wisdom of God." The display of the wisdom of God, by the church, in the work of redemption, was therefore the intent, or end, for which all things were created by Jesus Christ. Without the work of redemption, then, the purpose of God in creating all things, and the real use of the things themselves, would have been prevented.

(3.) The superior importance of the new creation is evident in this fact ; that the old creation, by its unceasing changes, continually decays and degenerates, while the new creation becomes, by its own changes, unceasingly brighter and better.

(4.) The old creation is a transitory work, made for consumption by fire ; whereas, the new is intended for eternal duration.

Thus from the nature of the case there is ample room to suppose that the work of redemption might, by divine appointment, be commemorated preferably to the work of creation.

2. It is expressly foretold by the prophet Isaiah, that the work of redemption shall be commemorated in preference to the work of creation.

Isaiah lxx. 17, 18, " For behold," saith God, " I create new heavens and a new earth ; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad, and rejoice for ever, in that which I create : for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." In this passage of scripture we are informed, that God designed to create what in the first of these verses is called, " new heavens and a new earth."

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This, in the second verse, is explained in simple language ; and is said to be “creating the people of God a joy and a rejoicing.” In other words, it is no other than redeeming and sanctifying the souls of men ; by means of which they become a rejoicing to God, and to each other.

In this declaration of the prophet there are two things particularly claiming our attention. The first is, that the new creation, or the work of redemption, is of far greater importance in the eye of God than the former creation. The second is an express prediction, that the former creation shall not be remembered by the church, nor come into mind ; or, in other words, shall not be commemorated. This I understand, as almost all similar Jewish phrases are to be understood, in a comparative sense ; and suppose the prophet to intend, that it shall be far less remembered, and commemorated, as being of far less importance.

That this passage refers to the times of the evangelical dispensation is certain from the prediction itself : since the new creation is the very subject of it, and the commencement of that dispensation. It is equally evident also from the whole strain of the chapter.

This passage appears to me to place the fact in the clearest light, that a particular, superior, and extraordinary commemoration of the work of redemption by the christian church, in all its various ages, was a part of the good pleasure of God, and was designed by him to be accomplished in the course of his providence. But there neither is, nor ever was, any public, solemn commemoration of this work by the christian church, except that which is holden on the first day of the

week, or the day in which Christ completed this great work by his resurrection from the dead. This prophecy has therefore been unfulfilled, so far as I see, unless it has been fulfilled in this very manner. But if it has been fulfilled in this manner, then this manner of fulfilling it has been agreeable to the true intention of the prophecy, and to the good pleasure of God expressed in it; and is therefore that very part of the system of his providence, which is here unfolded to mankind.

At the same time, it is to be remembered, that the former institution is still substantially preserved. The sabbath still returns upon one day in seven. The great facts, that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day," are still presented to the mind in their full force. The work of creating the heavens and the earth is therefore regularly commemorated, according to the original institution of God; while the new creation, as its importance demands, and as this prophecy directly foretells, takes its own superior place in the commemoration. Thus the institution, instead of being abrogated in every respect, is only changed in such a manner as to enlarge its usefulness and importance to mankind, and to become a solemn memorial of two wonderful works of God, instead of one. The Sabbath itself is unchanged. It still returns at the end of seven days. It is still a memorial of the creation. But the institution is enlarged in such a manner, as to commemorate also the work of redemption.

With this prophecy facts have corresponded in a wonderful manner. All christians commemorate the work of creation in their prayers and

praises, their religious meditations and discourses, from sabbath to sabbath. But every christian perfectly well knows, that the work of redemption holds a far higher place in every private, and in every public religious service ; and that, according to the declaration of God in this passage, “ the former is,” comparatively, “ not remembered, neither does it come into mind.” At the same time, the work of redemption is not merely the chief, but the only means of originating holiness in the soul, and altogether the principal means of advancing it towards perfection. In every respect, therefore, the christian sabbath is now better suited to the great ends of the institution, than the original day. Until the time of Christ’s resurrection, the seventh day commemorated the most glorious work which God had ever accomplished, and the most wonderful display of the divine perfections. But by the resurrection of Christ, a new and far more glorious work was finished. While the sabbath therefore was by divine appointment kept on the seventh day, it was exactly suited to the purpose of commemorating the most glorious work of God which had ever taken place. But after the resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week was plainly better fitted than any other day to become a religious memorial of both these wonderful works, by being the day on which Christ arose from the dead, and by returning regularly at the end of every six days. Whatever other opinions we adopt concerning this subject, it must, I think, be readily acknowledged, that no other day could possibly combine all these advantages.

This important consideration seems to be plainly intimated in the text. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. The seventh day is the sabbath. In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is ; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." It cannot escape the notice of every reader of this passage, that the duty of remembering the sabbath, to keep it holy, enjoined at the beginning, and the blessing and consecration mentioned at the end, are applied to *the sabbath*, and not to the day ; and that the seventh day is declared to be "the sabbath day," or the day on which the sabbath is to be holden. The meaning of this is obviously, that the seventh day is, or was at that time, the existing day of the sabbath ; without determining how long it should continue to possess this character. God established it indefinitely ; and, unless he should be pleased to change it, perpetually, as the day of the sabbath. But on whatever day he should think fit to establish the sabbath, it was to be remembered, and kept holy. The blessing also, and the sanctification, were annexed to the sabbath day, and not to the seventh. In this manner the christian church became informed of their duty, whenever the day should be changed ; and, if they performed it faithfully, were assured of this peculiar blessing. Thus also they were preserved from the fears which might otherwise arise of losing the blessing annexed to the sabbath, whenever the day on which it should be holden should be changed. Had the blessing, in this command, been annexed to the seventh day, it would probably have

occasioned an immovable perplexity to the christian church, had they found the present account of the sabbath contained in the new testament.

3. The hundred and eighteenth psalm is a direct prediction, that the day of Christ's resurrection was to be the day on which the sabbath should be holden under the gospel.

In the 14th verse of this psalm the divine writer declares, that "the Lord is his strength, and his song; and is become his salvation." This fact we know was accomplished, when Christ rose from the dead. In consequence of this great event, he hears "the voice of rejoicing, and of salvation, in the tabernacles of the righteous," or in the house of God. In the 19th verse he says, "Open to me the gates of righteousness. I will praise thee; for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation." This event he again describes in a new and under a very different image: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head-stone of the corner." He then subjoins, "This is the day which the Lord hath made:" that is, the day which Christ consecrated, or made into a holy day, when he became "the head-stone of the corner:" that is, when he arose from the dead. He then adds, "we will rejoice and be glad in it:" that is, we, the righteous, the church of God; for in their name he speaks throughout all the latter part of this psalm, whether speaking in the singular, or plural. In their name he says, in the following verse, "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord! O Lord! I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." The words of the two

last-mentioned verses are applied directly to Christ, by the multitudes who accompanied him in his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. "The multitudes," saith St. Matthew, "cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" The words of the last verse are also applied by Christ to himself, Matt. xxiii. 39. "For I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." The comment of the multitudes is reasonably supposed to be that of the Jewish church in general. That of Christ, and that of St. Peter, mentioned in the preceding chapter, are the decisive law of interpretation to the christian church. We are therefore warranted to conclude, that the psalmist here declares, not only the joy and gladness of the christian church in the resurrection of Christ, but also in the *day* on which he arose: for he says, "This is the *day* which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in *it*." This day he also declares to be a day of public worship; a day on which the gates of righteousness were to be opened, and "the righteous," or the church, as a body, were to enter them, and on which the ministers of the gospel were to "bless" them (in the Jewish language, or language of the temple service) "out of the house of the Lord;" or, in language adapted to the christian manner of worship, in the house of the Lord. The substance of this comment is beautifully given by Dr. Watts, in the two following stanzas:—

“ The work, O Lord, is thine,
 And wondrous in our eyes;
 This day declares it all divine,
 This day did Jesus rise.

“ This is the glorious day
 That our Redeemer made:
 Let us rejoice, and sing, and pray;
 Let all the church be glad.”

4. Christ has indicated, that the seventh day should cease to be the sabbath after his resurrection.

In Matthew ix. 14, we are informed, that the disciples of John came to him, and inquired of him why his disciples did not fast, as well as themselves, and the Pharisees. Christ replied, “ Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.” Christ was crucified and buried on Friday. At the close then of this day he was taken from the children of the bridechamber; that is, from his disciples. Throughout Saturday he lay in the grave. On the first day of the week, the christian sabbath, he was restored to them again. This Saturday then became to them the proper season of fasting, according to his own declaration. But the sabbath was a festival from the beginning. Such it continues to be unto the end. That it was to be such to the christian church is amply proved by the passage formerly quoted from Isaiah lvi. 6, 7, and from the express declarations just now quoted from Psalm cxviii. Fasting on this day can therefore never accord with its original and universal design. But on the seventh day, the day during which he

lay in the grave, as he informs us, it was proper that they should fast. In this declaration it is indicated not obscurely, that the seventh day would soon cease to be a season fitted for the observance of the sabbath.

It must be obvious to the least reflection, that this season of Christ's extreme humiliation is the most improper period conceivable for commemorating with joy and gladness the wonderful work of redemption. Every thing in this season must appear to a christian to demand humiliation and mourning, rather than exultation. During this period the enemies of Christ prevailed against him; and "the serpent," according to the first prophecy ever given concerning him to this world, "bruised his heel." To rejoice on this day, would be to lay hold on the time of our Saviour's greatest sufferings and deepest humiliation as the proper season for our greatest exultation. This certainly was not the conduct of the apostles. They mourned in the most melancholy and distressing manner. Nor do they appear ever to have regarded the seventh day afterwards as the holy, joyful rest of God. On the contrary, they transferred this festival to another day.

5. The apostles, by their example, have decisively taught us, that the day of Christ's resurrection was to be the christian sabbath.

On the first day of the week, the day of his resurrection, Christ met his disciples assembled together. On the first day of the week following he met them, again assembled together. On the first day of the week, at the feast called Pentecost, the Spirit descended in a miraculous and glorious manner upon the apostles. On the first

day of the week, the disciples assembled together customarily, "to break bread," and to make charitable contributions for their suffering brethren. From the three first of these facts it is plain, that Christ thought fit to honour this day with peculiar tokens of his approbation. From the last, that the apostles thought themselves warranted to devote it to religious purposes.

I have already shown above, and sufficiently, that God has absolutely prohibited all men, under severe denunciations, and with terrible expressions of his anger, either to form religious institutions, or to substitute their own institutions for his. It is clearly impossible, that the apostles, who have taught us this very doctrine, should, under the influence of inspiration, disobey him in this interesting particular, by forming so remarkable a religious institution ; abolishing that of God, and substituting their own in its place. Nothing is more evident to me, than that this example has all the weight which can be attached to any precept whatever. This will especially appear, if we remember, that Peter with the eleven apostles celebrated the first day of the week, and that Paul and his followers did the same. Paul received his gospel immediately from Christ ; and, informs us, in Galatians ii. 6, that the apostles at Jerusalem "added nothing to him." For three years he never saw one of them ; and had not the remotest correspondence with them. All the doctrines, therefore, which Paul acknowledged, he received directly from Christ, and was indebted for none of them to his companions in the apostleship. Yet Peter and his followers observed the first day of the week as the religious day,

and Paul and his followers observed the same. This is evident from his direction to the churches at Galatia and Corinth to "lay by them somewhat on the first day of the week," for the poor saints at Jerusalem. The reason why the first day of the week is pitched upon for this purpose is obviously this; that they assembled customarily on the first day of the week for religious purposes. Accordingly, in Acts xx. 7, we are informed, that the disciples in Troas came together on the first day of the week to break bread, and that Paul preached unto them, continuing his speech until midnight. But whence did these persons, thus separated, derive this agreement in their observance of the first day of the week? The only answer which can be given to this question, is, from the *inspiration* which guided them *both*. Had they been uninspired, their agreement in a case of this nature, where they acted independently of each other, would have proved, that they derived the doctrine, and the practice grounded on it, from a common source. Their character as inspired men, and apostles, proves beyond debate, that the common source, from which they thus harmoniously derived a religious institution, was God.

6. The same doctrine is proved from the already cited passage, Rev. i. 10. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day."

From this declaration it is evident, that in or about the year 96, when the Apocalypse was written and published, there was a day known and observed by christians generally, as the Lord's day. This appellation was, I presume, derived from the passage before quoted from Psalm cxviii;

in which it is said, concerning the day of Christ's resurrection, "This is the day which the Lord hath made:" that is, hath made of a common into a holy day; or, in other words, consecrated to himself. But the day pointed out in this passage is the day on which Christ rose from the dead.

That this was in fact the day styled by St. John "the Lord's day," is unanswerably evident from the history of the church; and it is equally evident, that the sabbath, or holy rest, together with all the religious services pertaining to it, were celebrated by the church on this day. Every one who has read with attention the new testament must have observed, that there is no hint, as well as no precept, directing christians to celebrate the seventh day as holy time. The ancient christians, particularly the jewish christians, when they had occasion to preach to the Jews, or to assemble with them, entered into their synagogues on the seventh day, and undoubtedly worshipped with them in their manner; but there is not the least reason to believe, either from the Acts, or from the Epistles, that they ever assembled of their own accord, on that day, for religious services in a regular or customary manner.

Ignatius, a companion of the apostles, says, in so many words, "Let us no more sabbatize," that is, keep the jewish sabbath, "but let us keep the Lord's day, on which our life arose."

Justin Martyr, who lived at the close of the first and the beginning of the second century, says, "On the day called Sunday, is an assembly of all who live in the city or country; and the memoirs of the apostles, and the writings of the

prophets," that is, the old and new testament, "are read." For this he assigns the reasons of the christians, namely, "that it was the day on which the creation of the world began, and on which Christ arose from the dead."

Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, the disciple of St. John himself, who lived in the second century, says, "On the Lord's day every one of us christians keep the sabbath; meditating in the law," or scriptures, "and rejoicing in the works of God."

Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, who lived in the time of Irenæus, that is, in the second century, says, in his letter to the church at Rome, "To-day we celebrate the Lord's day, when we read your epistle to us."

Tertullian, who also lived in the second century, speaks of the Lord's day as a christian solemnity.

Petavius declares, that "but one Lord's day was observed in the earliest times of the church."

It is indeed true, that in that miserable forgery, which professes itself to have been written by the apostles, and is styled *The Apostolical Constitutions*, but which was plainly the work of some impostor, living in the latter end of the fourth, or the beginning of the fifth century, certainly not earlier, it is directed, that christians should keep both the Jewish sabbath and the Lord's day, as religious festivals; and that every sabbath but one in the year, and every Lord's day, should be observed in this manner. It is also true, that in the fifth century both these days were kept in this manner by christians generally, except the churches of Rome and Alexandria, who did not observe the Jewish sabbath as a religious day.

This appears by the testimony of both Socrates and Sozomen. Concerning this subject Petavius declares, that "the most holy fathers agreed, that the apostles never ordained any thing of this nature." He also remarks, that the council of Laodicea, which probably sat about the year 363, forbade, in their 29th canon, that christians should rest from labour on the sabbath, or seventh day. For they say, "Christians ought not to Judaize, nor to rest on the sabbath, that is, the seventh day; but preferring the Lord's day to rest, if indeed it should be in their power, as christians."*

From these observations it is plain, that although in the fifth century many christians had reverted to the observation of the Jewish sabbath, while yet they universally celebrated the Lord's day; yet the practice, even in this period of miserable declension, was by no means universal. The churches of Rome and Alexandria never adopted it at all; and others plainly adopted it, as they did a great multitude of other corruptions at the same time, merely from their own construction of the scriptures. We cannot wonder that those, especially when we find among them celebrated ministers of religion, who admitted the protection and invocation of saints and martyrs, should admit any other corruption; and that they should construe those passages of scripture which speak of the sabbath as erroneously as they construed others.

7. The same truth appears in this great fact, that God has perpetually and gloriously annexed his blessing to the christian sabbath.

* Lardner.

If this day be not divinely instituted, then God has suffered his church to disuse and annihilate his own institution, and substitute one of mere human device in its stead. Will this be believed? But this is not all: he has annexed the blessing which he originally united to the sabbath instituted by himself, to that which was the means of destroying it, and which was established by human authority merely. After requiring that men should add nothing to his words, and forbidding them to diminish aught from them; after threatening the plagues denounced in the scriptures to him who should add unto the words which they contain; and declaring that he would take away out of the book of life the part of him who should take away from the words written in the scriptures; can any man believe that he would forsake, that he has forsaken, his own institution; an institution of this magnitude; an institution, on which have depended, in all lands and ages, the observation, influence, and existence of his holy law? Can any man believe that He, who so dreadfully punished Nadab and Abihu for forsaking his own institution, in a case of far inferior magnitude, and setting up one of their own in its stead, would not only not punish, but abundantly and unceasingly bless the christian church, while perpetrating and persisting in iniquity of exactly the same nature, and far greater in degree? The christian who can believe this, must be prepared to believe any thing.

Had men known nothing concerning the institution of God, the charity of their fellow-men might be naturally enough extended to them, while employed in religiously commemorating

Christ's resurrection. The appearance of piety in such a commemoration, and their freedom from the impiety of intruding upon a divine institution, might induce others to think favourably of their conduct. But in the case in hand, the institution was begun by the apostles, men inspired, chosen followers of Christ, and the erectors of his kingdom in the world. If they sinned, they sinned wilfully, and in defiance of their inspiration. With them, however, the blessing began to be annexed to this day in a most wonderful and glorious manner. From them it has been uninterruptedly continued to the present time. To this day, under God, as a primary mean, mankind are indebted for all the religion which has been in the world from the days of the apostles. If then the christian sabbath is not a divine institution, God has made a device of man a more powerful support to his spiritual kingdom, a more efficacious instrument of diffusing truth and righteousness, than most, perhaps than all, others; while, at the same time, he has, so far as I am able to discern, wholly neglected and forgotten a most solemn institution of his own. Thus a human device has been a peculiar, if not a singular, means of accomplishing the greatest glory to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and men, it would seem, will in the end "have whereof to glory before God."

This blessing has been too evident, too uniform, and too long continued, to admit of a doubt; too great and too wonderful to be passed over in silence. On this day, the perfections of God, manifested in the amazing works of creation and redemption, have, more than on all others, been

solemnly, gratefully, and joyfully remembered and celebrated. On this day, millions of the human race have been born unto God. On this day, christians have ever found their prime blessings. From the word and ordinances of God, from the influences of the Holy Spirit, from the presence of Christ in his church, christians have derived on this day, more than on all others, the most delightful views of the divine character, clear apprehensions of their own duty, lively devotion to the service of God, strength to overcome temptations, and glorious anticipations of immortality. Take this day from the calendar of the christian, and all that remains will be cloudy and cheerless. Religion will instantly decay. Ignorance, error, and vice will immediately triumph, the sense of duty vanish, morals fade away, the acknowledgment, and even the remembrance of God be far removed from mankind, the glad tidings of salvation cease to sound, and the communication between earth and heaven be cut off for ever.

CHAP. III.

Objections answered.

I SHALL now proceed to consider the objections which have been made to this doctrine. As all the important objections within my knowledge are adduced by the late archdeacon Paley, it is my design to reply to this respectable writer in form ; such a reply being, in my own apprehension, all that is necessary with respect to the subject at large.

I. The first and great objection of Dr. Paley

to the perpetuity of the sabbath is, that the account of its original institution is found in the following passage: (Exod. xvi. 22—30 :) “And it came to pass, that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man; and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord: Bake that which ye will bake to-day, and seethe that ye will seethe: and that which remaineth over, lay up for you, to be kept until the morning. And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade. And Moses said, Eat that to-day; for to-day is a sabbath unto the Lord: to-day ye shall not find it in the field. Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none. And it came to pass, that there went out some of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none. And the Lord said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days: abide ye every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.”

The argument, here, is wholly derived from this phraseology: To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord. To-day is a sabbath unto the Lord: and, the Lord hath given you the sabbath. In these expressions, Dr. Paley thinks he finds the first institution of the sabbath. In my view, however, after examining long, and often, the arguments of this respectable writer,

they appear to lead to the contrary conclusion. It is to be observed, that the whole argument depends on the first of these passages ; because, that being once introduced, the rest would, in the case supposed, follow it of course ; and because they refer directly to it, and are grounded upon it.

As a preface to the answer which I intend to make to this argument, I remark, that the words of Moses are addressed to the “ elders of Israel,” who had complained to him of the improper conduct of their countrymen, for gathering twice as much bread on the sixth day as they customarily gathered on other days. As Moses had forbidden them to leave of it till morning, and undoubtedly by divine inspiration, the elders supposed their countrymen to have trespassed in collecting this double quantity upon the sixth day. Upon this part of the story I observe,

1. That the division of time into weeks was perfectly known to the Israelites. This is proved by the phrases, “ the *sixth* day,” and “ the *seventh* day ;” obviously referring to the days of the *week*, and not to the days of the *month*. Now I ask, Whence had these people this scheme in dividing time, unless from the history of the creation, traditionally conveyed down to them ? This tradition, it will be observed, could come to them from Adam, through six persons ; Methuselah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, and Amram.

2. Although in the 5th verse God informed Moses, that the congregation should gather twice as much on the sixth day ; it seems highly probable, if not absolutely certain, that Moses did not inform *them* : for we find, that the elders,

who would, I think, certainly have received this information first, were plainly ignorant of it. The people, therefore, seem to have supposed the ensuing day to be the sabbath, of their own accord ; and for this reason to have ventured to gather a double quantity of manna, from an apprehension that the labour would be improper and unlawful on that day. Some of them, indeed, went out from a spirit of rebellion and unbelief, and probably under the influence of an idle curiosity, to learn whether the manna would descend on that day, contrary to the prediction of Moses, or not. But this fact affects not the argument in hand.

Let me now ask, whether the first of these declarations of Moses, " This is that, which the Lord hath said, To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord," is the language of a man, speaking of a thing altogether new and unheard of ; of a thing totally different from all other things hitherto known in the world ; or the language of a man referring to something *already known*. The remarkable fact, that the Israelites made no inquiry concerning this supposed novel institution ; although so eminently important, and so plain an object of rational curiosity, shows that the institution of the Sabbath was known to them. The conduct of the elders also would be unaccountable, if the institution were new, and now first made known to them.

Dr. Paley lays much stress on the words contained in the third declaration of Moses, which I have specified : " The Lord hath given you the sabbath." In the 23d verse, when the elders had reported to him the supposed transgression of their countrymen, in gathering a double portion

of manna on the sixth day of the week, he answers, "This is that which the Lord hath said; To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord;" that is, God declares to you, that the holy rest unto himself is to be holden on the morrow. "Bake that which ye will bake to-day; and seethe that which ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you, to be kept until the morning." The next day he renewed the same monition; and informed them further, that there would be no manna on that day; nor on the seventh day at any *future* period. They were therefore to gather it on six days of the week only, and on every sixth day to provide the necessary supply for the seventh.

Some of the people, however, went out to gather manna on that very day, but found none. Upon this, God says to Moses, "How long refuse ye to keep my commandments? See, for that the Lord hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days." The words, "The Lord hath given you the sabbath," are perfectly explained by the original declaration of Moses on this subject, made the preceding day. "To-morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the Lord." This is the giving of the sabbath here referred to: and this, I flatter myself, has been shown to be something widely different from originally instituting the sabbath.

The obvious explanation of these words here given equally explains a passage in Ezekiel xx. 12, and another in Nehemiah ix. 14, quoted by Dr. Paley for the same purpose. The former of these is, "Moreover, also, I gave them my

sabbaths:" the latter, "Thou madest known unto them thy holy sabbath." If the passage in Ezekiel refers to the sabbath at all, which may be doubted, it is merely a repetition of the words of Moses. If it refers to the various fasts and feasts of the Jews, frequently denominated sabbaths, it has no connection with the subject. The latter of these passages accords more naturally and obviously with the account which has been here given, than with that of Dr. Paley. Neither of them, it is perfectly plain, furnishes the least additional support to his opinion.

Another argument for the same purpose is derived by this respectable writer from the following declaration, (Ex. xxxi. 16, 17,) "It," that is, the sabbath, "is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever." The same thing is also mentioned by Ezekiel, in nearly the same terms. Upon this Dr. Paley observes, "Now it does not seem easy to understand how the sabbath could be a sign between God and the people of Israel, unless the observance of it was peculiar to that people, and designed to be so."

The only question of importance here is, whether the fact, that the sabbath is made a sign between God and Israel, made it cease to be a memorial of the display of the divine perfections accomplished in the creation. If not, then the sabbath still remained at that time, and remains now, such a memorial. But I presume neither Dr. Paley himself, nor any other man would say, that God, in making the sabbath a sign between him and Israel, intended to release them from commemorating on that day his perfections, thus displayed in the work of creation, and his own solemn

commemoration of them, when he rested at the close of this work upon the seventh day. But if the Israelites were not released from this commemoration by the passage in question, the rest of mankind could be affected by it in no manner whatever.

The truth is, that the ordinance, which made the sabbath a sign to the Israelites, was subsequent to the promulgation of the decalogue, and cannot affect that law, even remotely; as I shall soon demonstrate. In the same manner the sabbath was made a memorial of the deliverance of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt, and a type of the promised rest in Canaan. These were all merely additional uses of the sabbath, to which it was happily applied, because they perfectly harmonized with its original design.

In Deuteronomy vi. 8, Moses, after reciting the decalogue, and the summary of it contained in the two great commands of the moral law, says to Israel, "Thou shalt bind them, for a sign, upon thine hand." A sign, which the Israelites by the command of God were to bind upon their hands, was a sign between God and them, in the same manner, as was the sabbath. Now I ask, whether it would be proper to say, that "it does not seem easy to understand how the decalogue, and the two great commands in which it is summed up, could be a sign between God and the people of Israel, unless the observance of them was peculiar to that people, and designed to be so?"

What was intended by making the sabbath a sign between God and Israel is declared by God himself in Ezekiel xx. 12; "I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them;

that they may know that I am Jehovah, who sanctify them." It will not be denied, that the whole human race are equally interested with the Israelites in this knowledge. All that was peculiar to them was this; they alone, for many ages, had, and it was foreseen by God that they would have, the knowledge in question; and would be the only medium of communicating it to other nations. The sabbath, therefore, was so far peculiarly a sign to them; but is obviously in its nature, and necessarily, a sign also, in a general sense, of the same knowledge to every nation, afterwards acquainted with the sabbath. From this very declaration in Ezekiel, in which the object of rendering the sabbath a sign to the Israelites is pointed out, it is clear, that "the observance of it was not designed to be peculiar to that people," unless the knowledge of Jehovah was to be perpetually confined to them.

Dr. Paley further observes, "If the sabbath be binding upon christians, it must be binding as to the day, the duties, and the penalty; in none of which it is received."

It will be remembered, that the sabbath, and the day on which it is kept, are separate parts of the institution; so separate, that the sabbath itself may be perpetual, and yet the day be changed successively, through every part of the week. The institution of the day I have already acknowledged to be no less obligatory than that of the sabbath itself; unless it can be fairly shown to have been changed by the same authority. Whether this has, in fact, been shown, in the preceding chapter, must be left for the reader to determine.

With regard to the duties of the sabbath, I shall only observe, that this point will be examined hereafter.

As to the penalty, it will be remembered that it is not contained in the decalogue ; but is merely a part of the civil law and internal police of the Jewish nation. Still, it may be useful to try this reasoning with other commands of the decalogue. In the two first precepts, it is acknowledged, that we, as well as the Israelites, are forbidden to worship idols, or other gods, beside Jehovah. Now it is well known, that the Israelites who disobeyed these commands were by the law of Moses to be put to death. It is presumed, that Dr. Paley would not believe this penalty to be binding upon us ; and that he would still acknowledge the commands themselves to be no less obligatory upon *us*, than upon *them*. It is presumed also, that he would acknowledge the fifth command to be equally binding upon all men. In Deut. xxi. 18—21, and in Prov. xxx. 17, it is required, that children, disobeying this command, shall be put to death. Would Dr. Paley acknowledge this penalty to be binding upon *us* ? Or would he deny our obligation to obey the command ?

II. It is asserted by this writer, that Genesis ii. 1—3, does not contain an account of the original institution of the sabbath.

This assertion he supports by the following reasons ; “ that the observation of the sabbath is not mentioned in the history of the world before the call of Abraham ; that it is not mentioned in the history of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; which, he says, is in many parts sufficiently circumstantial and domestic ; that in Exodus xvi. no

intimation is given that the sabbath then appointed was only the revival of an ancient institution, which had been neglected or forgotten; that no such neglect is imputed to the inhabitants of the old world, or to any part of the family of Noah; and that there is no record of any permission to dispense with the institution during the Egyptian bondage, or on any other public emergency.

With regard to the last of these reasons, I answer only, that there is no record of any neglect of the institution, either during the Egyptian bondage, or during any other public emergency. During the Babylonish captivity, we have no record of any such permission, nor of any observance of the sabbath. Yet, as Nehemiah and his companions plainly observed it after their return from that captivity, it is presumed, Dr. Paley will not deny that it was observed by the Jewish nation during that whole period.

That no negligence of the sabbath should be charged to the antediluvians, to Noah, or to any others, in cases where the sabbath is not even mentioned, can occasion no surprise; and, it is presumed, can furnish no argument relative to this or any other question. It deserves, however, to be remarked, as an answer to every observation which can be made of this nature, that the first censure for any impropriety in the observation of the sabbath, uttered concerning the Israelites in the scriptures, is found in the prophet Isaiah; about seven hundred and sixty years before Christ, and seven hundred and thirty-one years after the events recorded in Exodus xvi. The second is found in Ezekiel; written about five hundred and ninety-three years before Christ, and eight hundred

and ninety-seven years after these events. Can it, then, be surprising, when we know, from these very passages, that the Israelites merited not a little censure for their profanations of the sabbath, and when we yet find these to be the first censures cast upon them in the scriptures, that Noah, his family, and the antediluvians, should not be censured?

The third of these reasons cannot, after what has been said in the former part of this chapter, need any answer. I shall, therefore, direct the following observations to the two remaining reasons; perhaps with more propriety considered as one; namely, the silence of the scriptures concerning the observation of the sabbath by those who lived before the call of Abraham, and by the three first patriarchs. Concerning this subject, I observe,

1. If all these persons did in fact neglect or forget the institution it would not alter the case at all. The institution of booths is declared, in Nehemiah viii. 17, to have been neglected and forgotten, from the time of Joshua, the son of Nun, until after Nehemiah and his companions returned from the captivity; a period of nine hundred and eighty years. Neither Samuel, David, Solomon, Hezekiah, nor Josiah observed it: and let it be remembered, that no censure is cast upon them for their neglect; nor any hint given, that they were guilty of such neglect, until the close of this long period, nor even then was any other notice taken of this subject, but what is contained in this declaration of Nehemiah. Yet Nehemiah revived this solemnity; and has declared it to be obligatory upon that generation, and upon those of succeeding

ages, in the same manner as if it had never been disused.

2. There is no reason to suppose that the fact would have been mentioned, if the sabbath had been exactly observed by the patriarchs, and by all who preceded them. If sabbaths, in the plural, be supposed to denote the sabbath, then the first mention of this subject made after the time of Moses, occurs in 1 Chron. xxiii. 31, in the instructions of David to Solomon concerning building the temple, at the distance of near five hundred years. The same word occurs thrice in 2 Chronicles; namely, in the fourth, eighth, and thirty-first chapters; in the two former of these instances as a repetition of, or allusion to, the words of David, and both in the history of Solomon. The latter instance is in the history of Hezekiah, seven hundred and sixty-five years after the period above mentioned. The same word occurs in Isaiah, about seven hundred and thirty years from that period. The word sabbath is mentioned five times in the history of the Jewish church before the captivity. The first of them is a mere note concerning the business of the Kohathites; which was "to prepare the shew-bread every sabbath." The time when it was written was that of David, near five hundred years after this period; see 1 Chron. ix. 32. The second is the speech of the Shunamite's husband; "It is neither new moon, nor sabbath;" not referring, in my opinion, to the weekly sabbath at all; almost six hundred years from the above period. The third is in 2 Kings xi.; a part of the speech of Jehoiada to the rulers of Judah. "A third part of you, that enter in on the sabbath, shall even be keepers of

the king's house ; and two parts of all you that go forth on the sabbath, even they shall be keepers of the watch of the house of the Lord." Immediately after this speech it is also subjoined, that "the rulers took every man his men that were to come in on the sabbath, with them that should go out on the sabbath, and they came to Jehoiada the priest." These, it will be remembered, constitute but a single instance of mentioning the sabbath, an instance occurring at the distance of more than six hundred years. Another instance occurs in the history of Ahaz, and is the following ; "The covert for the sabbath turned he from the house of the Lord, for the king of Assyria:" seven hundred and fifty-two years. The word is also mentioned in Isaiah lvi., lviii., and lxv., about seven hundred and eighty years. These are all the instances in which the word occurs either in prophecy or history, from the time of Moses till after the return of the captivity ; a period of one thousand years.

Of this account it is to be observed,

(1.) That the word sabbaths, in the plural, is mentioned four times in the history of the Jewish church, and twice in the prophecy of Isaiah, within a period of seven hundred and eighty years. The first, second, and third occurring incidentally in the mention of the duty of the priests in the orders of David ; the second, a repetition of them by Solomon ; the third, in an account of their execution. These together really constitute but one instance. The fourth occurs incidentally also, in a sentence giving, in almost the same words, an account of the same duty of the priests in the time of Hezekiah. The fifth is a censure of the Jews for the pollution of the new moons and sabbaths, uttered

by the prophet Isaiah. The three first of these instances occur at the distance of about five hundred years, the others between seven and eight hundred from the time of the supposed institution. In but one of these, and that the last, is there any thing like an account of the manner in which the sabbath was kept, or neglected. All the rest are merely incidental ; and teach us nothing more than that sabbaths were in existence, and were involved in the Jewish ritual.

(2.) As *the sabbath* appears to be regularly distinguished from *sabbaths* ; and as sabbaths are regularly joined with the new moons, and other holy-days of the Jews, which the sabbath never is ; it is clear to me, that the sabbath is not alluded to in any of these instances.

(3.) The phrase, the sabbath, occurs in three instances (calling those in the account of Jehoiada one) in the history of the Jewish church before the captivity ; all of them, however, entirely incidental, and containing no account of the sabbath as an institution, nor of the observance, nor of the neglect of it. This is all which is said of it before the return from the Babylonish captivity, except what is said by the prophet Isaiah : and there is but a single passage in this prophet, in which this phrase is used with reference to the times of the Jewish dispensation.

We are thus come to this conclusion, that there are but five passages in which the sabbath is mentioned in the Jewish writings, from the time of Moses to the return of the captivity—one thousand years. Two of them are found in prophecy, and three of them in their history. The first of these is mentioned about five hundred years, the second

six hundred, and the third seven hundred and fifty-two, and the two remaining ones which are found in prophecy, nearly eight hundred, from the time of the supposed institution.

Now let me ask, can any person wonder, that in an account so summary as the history of the three first Jewish patriarchs, there should be no mention of the sabbath, when also, during a period of about five hundred years, containing the histories of Joshua, of the judges, particularly Samuel, and of Saul, it is not once mentioned? The question certainly cannot need an answer. The only wonder is, that so sensible a writer should have thought this an argument.

3. God himself has, I apprehend, declared, that the sabbath was instituted at this time.

For, in the first place, this is the true and only rational interpretation of the declarations in the second of Genesis. Dr. Paley supposes, that the words of the historian, "And God rested on the seventh day from all the work, which he had made; and God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work, which God created and made;" declare only the reasons for which God blessed and sanctified the sabbath, and not the time at which this was done; and that it was mentioned at this time, only on account of its connection with the subject, and not because the blessing and sanctification took place at this period. To this I answer, Moses has written this story exactly in the manner in which he has written the whole history of the creation, paradisaical state, and the apostacy; nay, almost the whole of the history contained in the book of Genesis. There is as much reason to believe that

the sabbath was blessed and sanctified at this time, from the manner in which the story is written, as there is to believe that our first parents were turned out of Paradise before the birth of Cain and Abel. The order of time is, I apprehend, exactly observed in the history, except where the historian has taken up again a particular part of the history, for the purpose of detailing it, and has for this end interrupted the general course of his narrative. Of the justice of this observation the bare reading of the story will, I think, convince any person, who has not a preconceived opinion to support.

What is thus sufficiently evident from the narrative, God appears to me to have decided in the following words, (Exod. xx. 11) : "For in six days the Lord made heaven, and earth, the sea, and all that in them is ; and rested the seventh day : wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed (or sanctified) it." Here God, repeating the very words of the narrative, declares, that he had already blessed and sanctified the sabbath, at some time preceding that at which this command was promulgated. The sabbath, therefore, was blessed and sanctified before this command was given. That this was not done at the time when Dr. Paley supposes the sabbath to have been instituted, nor at any period between the first sabbath and the giving of the law, seems to me clear from this ; that there is not a single hint given of the subject, either at the time of the supposed institution, or in any other part of the Mosaic dispensation, except that in the second of Genesis. That the blessing was then given must I think be concluded, because God himself, relating this great transaction, adopts the same language, and says, "Wherefore

the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." That the blessing of the sabbath was a past transaction is unquestionable. There is no hint concerning the existence of it, but in these two instances; and in both these it is immediately connected with God's finishing the creation, and resting on the seventh day.

4. That it was instituted at the beginning is evident from the fact, that other nations, who could not have derived it from Moses, regarded the seventh day as holy.

Hesiod says, "The seventh day is holy."

Homer and Callimachus give it the same title.

Theophilus of Antioch says, concerning the seventh day, "The day which all mankind celebrate."

Porphry says, "The Phœnicians consecrated one day in seven as holy."

Linus says, "A seventh day is observed among saints, or holy people."

Lucian says, "The seventh day is given to school-boys as a holy day."

Eusebius says, "Almost all the philosophers and poets acknowledge the seventh day as holy."

Clemens Alexandrinus says, "The Greeks, as well as the Hebrews, observe the seventh day as holy."

Josephus says, "No city of Grecks, or barbarians, can be found, which does not acknowledge a seventh-day's rest from labour."

Philo says, "The seventh day is a festival to every nation."

Tibullus says, "The seventh day, which is kept holy by the Jews, is also a festival of the Roman women."

The several nations here referred to cannot, it is plain, have fallen upon this practice by chance. It is certain they did not derive it from the Jews. It follows, therefore, that they received it by tradition from a common source; and that source must have been Noah and his family.

III. To the argument from the insertion of this command in the decalogue Dr. Paley answers that the distinction between positive and moral precepts, or, in his language, between positive and natural duties, was unknown to the simplicity of ancient language: meaning, I suppose, that it was unknown to the ancients, and, among others, to Moses: otherwise I cannot see how the observation is applicable to the question.

I confess myself surprised at this answer. Did not God understand this distinction, when he wrote the decalogue? Did he not know, that this distinction would afterwards be made and understood, in all its influence? Was not the decalogue written for all who should read the scriptures? Was it not so written, as to be adapted to the use of all for whom it was written? Did not God discern, that this distinction was founded in the nature of things; and did he not foresee, that, although the Israelites should not perceive it during any period of their national existence, yet it still would be perceived by innumerable others of mankind? Did he not provide effectually for this fact, whenever it should happen; and for all the difficulties and doubts which might arise from the want of such a distinction?

From this observation, and several others, Dr. Paley appears to consider the decalogue as written

by Moses in the same manner as the other parts of the Pentateuch; and as having no more authority than the civil and ceremonial law of the Israelites; unless where this authority is discernible in the nature of the commands themselves. As this opinion appears not only erroneous, but dangerous, I shall oppose it with the following reasons:—

1. The law of the Israelites, both civil and ceremonial, is distinguished from the decalogue in this great particular: that was written by Moses in a book; this was first spoken by the voice of God, and then twice written by his finger on tables of stone, amid all the awful splendours of Mount Sinai.

2. Moses, after the reciting the decalogue in Deuteronomy v., immediately subjoins these words: “The Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them on two tables of stone, and delivered them unto me. And it came to pass, when ye heard the voice out of the midst of the darkness, (for the mountain did burn with fire,) that ye came near unto me, even all the heads of your tribes, and your elders: and ye said, Behold, the Lord our God hath showed us his glory, and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the midst of the fire. We have seen this day, that God doth talk with man, and he liveth. Now, therefore, why should we die? for this great fire will consume us. If we hear the voice of the Lord our God any more, we shall die. For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living

God, speaking out of the midst of the fire, and hath lived?"

To this petition God consented, and promised to deliver his remaining precepts to Moses, and through him to Israel. Why was this distinction made? Why was the decalogue spoken by the voice, and written by the finger of God? and why, in the emphatical language of Moses, did he "add no more?" The only reason which can be alleged, is the transcendent dignity and importance of these commands. The view which Moses himself had of the total distinction between the decalogue, and the rest of the law written by him, is evident from this fact, that he commanded the Israelites to write them plainly, after they had passed over Jordan, upon great stones plastered with plaster, and set up by the congregation near the altar which they were directed to build.* Why were they thus distinguished here?

3. Christ has distinguished them in a similar manner. When the young ruler came to Christ, and asked "What good thing he should do, that he might have eternal life?" Christ said to him, "Thou knowest the commandments." The young man asked, "Which?" Christ, in reply, repeated five of the commandments in the second table, and the summary which contains them all. This shows beyond a doubt, that "the commandments" was a name appropriated to the decalogue, and denoted the same superiority to all other commands, as the name, *The Bible*, or *The Book*, denotes with respect to all other books.

Again: Christ, in answer to the scribe, who

* See Kennicott's Dissertations.

asked him, "which is the first and great commandment?" recites the two great commands which Moses had made the sum of the decalogue; and adds, "on these two commands hang all the law and the prophets." In other words, on these two commands is suspended the whole volume of the old testament. What can be a stronger testimony of the superiority of the decalogue to every other part of that volume?

4. St. Paul (Rom. xiii. 9) says, "For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying; namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Here the apostle, after reciting five of the commands contained in the second table of the decalogue, adds, "If there be any other commandment." Is not this direct proof, that he regarded the decalogue as containing all those which were, by way of eminence, "the commandments of God," and as separated by a broad line of distinction from every other precept?

5. It is well known that the Jews always considered the decalogue as entirely separated from every other part of the old testament. The prophets who succeeded Moses did nothing as moral teachers but explain and enforce it. Christ declared, that "sooner shall heaven and earth pass away, than one jot or one tittle of this law shall pass, until all be fulfilled." The apostles have enforced no other precepts as obligatory upon christians. The Jews have at this day these commands written out in large letters, and

hung up in their synagogues, as solemn monitors to all who enter them of their duty. In a manner correspondent with this have they ever been regarded by christians. They are at this day proverbially known by the name of the Ten Commandments, and the moral law.

St. Paul, in a passage which ought not to be omitted on this occasion, (Eph. vi. 1—3,) reciting the fifth command, says, “This is the first commandment with promise.” But God had given to Noah, to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, and to the Israelites, many commands, and annexed to them many promises, before the law was delivered from Mount Sinai. In what sense, then, was the fifth command the first to which *a promise* was annexed? Plainly, in this sense only, that it is the first in the decalogue which has this mark of distinction. In the eye of St. Paul, therefore, the decalogue contained all those which he thought proper to call the commandments; and was, in his view, of a character totally distinct, and totally superior, to every other part of the old testament.

As the apostle recites this command to the Ephesians, who were gentiles, as obligatory on them no less than on the Jews; it is clear, that the whole decalogue, unless some part of it has been plainly disannulled, is entirely obligatory on christians. Had there been any distinction in this respect between the different precepts of this law, St. Paul must, it would seem, have made it on this occasion. He would, at least, have made it somewhere; and not have left so important a subject without a single note of illustration.

IV. Dr. Paley says, that “St. Paul evidently

appears to consider the sabbath as a part of the Jewish ritual, and not binding upon christians, as such : " Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days ; which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ." Col. ii. 16, 17.

To this observation I answer, first, that this passage refers not in any sense to the sabbath, but merely to the ordinary holidays of the Jews. The burden of proving the contrary lies upon the disciples of Dr. Paley.

Secondly, if this be denied, I assert, that it refers to the seventh day only, and not at all to the christian sabbath. Until the contrary is proved, I shall consider this answer as sufficient ; especially as the christian sabbath is not in the scriptures, and was not by the primitive church called the sabbath ; but " the first day of the week," and " the Lord's day."

V. The same writer says, that " the observation of the sabbath was not one of the articles enjoined by the apostles, in Acts, xv., upon the christian gentiles."

I answer, Neither was abstinence from theft, murder, lying, coveting, profaneness, nor idolatry.

VI. Dr. Paley asserts, that " the observation of the sabbath is not expressly enjoined in the new testament."

To this I answer, That the christian sabbath was originally introduced into the church much more successfully and happily than it could have been done by an express injunction.

In order to judge of this subject, it is necessary to bring up to our view the situation of those

to whom the gospel was first preached. These were all Jews; intensely bigoted to every part of their religion, and peculiarly to their sabbath. The day had been appointed by God himself; and was acknowledged to be divinely appointed by Christ and his apostles. The experiment of interfering with the feelings of the Jews concerning the sabbath, even in the most lawful manner, had been sufficiently tried by Christ to discourage the apostles from every unnecessary attempt of this nature. Accordingly, the apostles pursued a peaceful and unobjectionable method. They celebrated at times, and probably always, the Jewish sabbath, when they were among Jews. The Jews at the same time, without any objection, yielded to their example and authority, in celebrating the christian worship on the day of Christ's resurrection. They were circumcised; but they were also willingly baptized. They celebrated the passover; but willingly added to it the Lord's supper. They prayed in the temple; but they willingly united also in the prayers and praises of christian assemblies holden in private houses, or in the fields. While the Jewish service was neither attacked nor neglected, they made not the least objection to that of the christian church. In this manner, all these ordinances grew into use, veneration, and habit; and, in the end, gained such a possession of the mind, and such a strength of authority, as could neither be overthrown nor weakened.

When the apostles came to declare in form, that the Jewish worship was to cease; the minds of the church were so well prepared to receive this declaration, that it was carried into a general

execution. Difficulties and divisions arose, indeed, about this subject in several churches, particularly about circumcision, and produced a course of serious contention. What would have been the case, had this part of the system been begun at an earlier period?

About the christian sabbath no dispute appears to have existed during the three first centuries. All the churches appear to have adopted it, and to have neglected the Jewish sabbath, without any difficulty. Was not this method of introducing so important a change dictated by true wisdom, and a better method than any other?

The example of the apostles is an example to all christians. Were we then to give up the point contested in the objection, we have still such a law in this example; and so efficacious, that probably no doctrine has been more generally received than that of the christian sabbath, and no duty more generally performed than the observation of it, down to the present time.

The absolute necessity of establishing the doctrines and duties of christianity among the Jews, in the infancy of the church, has been shown in a former chapter. I shall only add, that it seems impossible to have introduced among that people the christian sabbath in any other manner than that which was adopted by the apostles, unless their whole character had been miraculously changed.

PART THE SECOND.

ON THE OBSERVATION OF THE SABBATH.

CHAP. IV.

The Manner in which the Sabbath is to be observed.

“ If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.”—ISAIAH lviii. 13, 14.

THIS passage is the most minute and perfect summary of the duties incumbent on mankind with respect to this holy day, which is contained in the scriptures. It is a prediction to the Jews, announcing, that if they will perform these duties, God will greatly prosper them with spiritual and temporal blessings, in the land of their fathers. In my own opinion, it especially respects a period yet to come. In examining this subject, I shall endeavour,

I. To point out the nature and extent of these duties ; and,

II. To show that they are binding upon us.

I. I shall endeavour to point out the nature and extent of these duties.

In examining this subject, I shall adopt the scheme of the text ; and mention,

First, the things from which we are to abstain.

Secondly, the things which we are to perform.

1. We are to abstain from every thing tending to profane the day in thought, conversation, and conduct.

All who read the gospel know, or may know perfectly, that sin may be as easily and as extensively committed in thought, as in word or action ; and that the real seat of sin is in the heart. With the reformation of our hearts, then, we are always to begin our duty. We may as easily and grossly profane the sabbath, so far as we ourselves only are concerned, by thoughts which are unsuited to its nature, as we can by any actions whatever. If our minds are intent on our business, or our pleasures, if our affections wander after them, if we are cold or lukewarm with respect to our religious duties, if we are negligent of a serious and cordial attention to them, if we regard with impatience the interruption occasioned to our secular concerns, if we wish the institution had not been appointed, or the time in which it is to be kept lessened ; then, plainly, we do not esteem “ the sabbath a delight,” nor abstain from “ finding our own pleasure.” So long as this is the state of our thoughts, all our outward conformity to this precept (for such is

really the nature of the text) will be merely hypocritical. Every oblation from such a mind will be vain; and all its "incense an abomination." "The sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies," among persons who act in this manner, will be such as God "cannot away with;" and their solemn meeting will be iniquity.

The heart gives birth to all the movements of the tongue. We profane the sabbath, whenever we employ the time in worldly conversation. Such conversation is in the text denoted by the phrase, "speaking thine own words:"—"thine own" being supplied by the translators. I think this supplement rational; since in the two preceding clauses we find "doing thine own ways," and "finding thine own pleasure." Bishop Lowth, from similar phraseology in the ninth verse, supposes it should be "vain words." The meaning, however, will differ immaterially.

Such conversation is, like our thoughts, directed indifferently to subjects of business and of pleasure; and in both cases the sabbath is subverted, and, so far as this conversation extends, is changed from a holy into a secular day. God is robbed of his rights, and of his service; and we are prevented from attaining, and from a disposition to attain, the holiness which is indispensable to salvation.

There is no way in which the sabbath is more easily, more insensibly, more frequently, and more fatally violated, than this. Temptations to it are always at hand. The transgression always seems a small one, usually a dubious one at the worst, and often no transgression at all. Multitudes of persons, of sober and well-meaning dispositions,

nay, multitudes, as there is but too much reason to fear, of professing christians, beginning with religious subjects, slide imperceptibly towards those which are considered as moral in such a degree as scarcely to differ from religious ones; thence to secular themes, bordering upon these; and thence to mere matters of business or amusement. Such persons, before they are aware, find themselves occupied in conversing about the affairs of the neighbourhood—the strangers who are at church—the new dresses—fashions—business—diversions—news—and politics. To these they are led by mere worldly conversation concerning the prayers, the psalmody, or the sermon; as having been well or ill devised, written, spoken, or performed; by a history, merely secular, of the sickness and deaths in the neighbourhood, or elsewhere; or of the dangerous or fatal accidents which have lately happened; the state of the weather—the season—the crops—the prospects—the affairs of the family—and by innumerable other things of a similar nature. The next step is, ordinarily, an habitual employment of this holy day in open, cool, and self-satisfied conversation about business, schemes of worldly pursuits, bargains, gains, and losses. It is not to be understood, that christians go all these lengths. It is my real belief, however, that they go much further than they can justify; and fail in this manner of their duty, their improvement in the christian life, their proper exemplariness of character, the evidence of their piety which would spring from these sources, the hope which it would inspire, the peace which would accompany them, and the joy in which they would delightfully terminate.

Many sober men, however, who, but for this very conduct, might probably become christians, go all these lengths; and thus lose insensibly their tenderness of conscience, their soberness of mind, and their desire, as well as their hope, of eternal life. Men less well-principled start originally at the *end* of this career, and thus annihilate the sabbath at once; bidding, without anxiety, a final adieu to the sabbath itself, and to its rich, exalted, and immortal blessings.

The profanation of the sabbath by *actions* is seen and acknowledged by all decent men, who acknowledge it as a day consecrated by God to himself. Actions are so open to the view of mankind, are so definite a proof of the disposition, and, when violations of a known rule of duty, constitute so gross a proof of impiety, that all doubts concerning the true construction to be given of them vanish whenever they appear. The common and favourite modes of profaning the sabbath in this way are spending our time in dress, in ministering to a luxurious appetite, in walking or riding for amusement, in writing letters of friendship, in visiting, and in reading books which are not of a religious, but merely of a decent character, and ultimately those which are formed to be the means of amusement and sport. The end of this progress, generally esteemed more gross, though perhaps in many instances not more, and in others less sinful, is the devotion of this sacred day to downright business. Persons who go this length occupy the time in writing letters of business, posting their accounts, visiting post-offices, making bargains, transmitting money to their correspondents, going or

sending to markets, making journies, at first with, and afterwards without pretences of necessity; and, ultimately, labouring openly in the ordinary employments of life. This is what is called in the text "doing our own ways." A man's way, in scriptural language, is the customary course of his life.

All these things, whether existing in thought, word, or action, are called our own, in contradistinction to those which are God's: that is, to those which are required of us by God; and every one of them is prohibited in the text.

The sacred nature of this day, and the solemn consecration of it by God to himself, together with all the advantages which we enjoy for religious instruction, and for all the duties of piety, furnish such a body of motives to our abstinence from sin, as cannot be resisted without peculiar guilt. Every sin committed upon this day is aggravated by the fact, that we have resisted these motives. At the same time, we are, by its very nature, so withdrawn from the world, so secured against temptation, and so much at leisure for solemn meditation, and for the establishment of firm resolutions of obedience in our minds, that, if we sin upon this day, we sin with fewer inducements to the iniquity than upon other occasions. He who indulges his wickedness on the sabbath, will be in danger of rioting in it on the other days of the week.

We are also required to abstain from idleness.

Although the sabbath is never to be spent in secular business, or amusement, it is still to be, invariably, a day of industrious exertion. There are some persons, who feel too much regard to

the dictates of their consciences, to public opinion, to the commands of God, or to all of them, to consume the sabbath in business or amusement; still, having no relish for the duties of the day, they spend it in idleness, satisfied with abstaining from those which they esteem the grosser and more direct violations of this divine institution. Accordingly, they lounge about their houses, gardens, or farms, and waste the season of salvation in sloth, sleep, or such a course of existence as resembles that of the oyster; a state bordering upon the line which separates animated beings from those which are inanimate. This course of conduct is an annihilation of the sabbath, the death of the day, and a frustration of all the designs and blessings of God connected with this heavenly institution. The sabbath was intended to be the means of honouring God, and of saving the souls of men. But idleness is always dishonourable to God, and hostile to the salvation of the soul. Both of these great objects are accomplished by him only, who is "not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

In all the above-recited particulars, those who are guilty of them openly violate the law of God, squander the accepted time, waste and abuse the means of grace, and lessen, sabbath by sabbath, their hopes of eternal life.

2. The duties which we are to perform are, generally, all the various offices of religion. Good men in ancient times entered on the sabbath day into the house of the Lord with praise and prayer. The Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets were "read in the synagogues every sabbath day."

They “feared God in the assembly of his saints; they praised him for his mighty acts, uttered abundantly the memory of his great goodness, and sung of his righteousness. They went on from strength to strength; every one of them in Zion appeared before God.” They esteemed “a day in his courts as better than a thousand. Their souls longed, yea, even fainted, for the courts of the Lord; their heart and their flesh cried out for the living God.” Accordingly, “the Lord God was to them a sun, and a shield. He gave them grace and glory; and withheld from them no good thing.” In the same manner the early christians “esteemed the sabbath a delight, and the holy of the Lord, honourable.” In the times of the apostles, “they continued in fellowship, in prayer, and in breaking of bread.” They sung “psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs.” They prophesied, taught the doctrines of the scriptures, uttered and interpreted revelations, and collected alms for such saints as were in peculiar circumstances of distress. All these examples abundantly show us, that good men during the ages of inspiration steadily accorded, and thought it their duty to accord, with the requisitions contained in the text. What was their duty is ours. All these solemn services, therefore, and others connected with them, it is incumbent on us to perform “in spirit and in truth.” We are to “join ourselves to the Lord, to serve him,” according to the prediction of Isaiah concerning us, and the other gentiles; “to love the name of the Lord: to keep the sabbath from polluting it; and to take hold of his covenant.” Particularly,

We are to perform all the duties of public worship.

The sabbath, as has been observed, was originally appointed for the commemoration of the divine glory, manifested in creating the world; and for the attainment and improvement of holiness in man. The manner in which we should commemorate the glory of God in the work of creation, on this day, is sufficiently taught us by the manner in which the first sabbath was celebrated. Then, we are informed, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." In the same manner was the work of the new creation, and the divine glory displayed in it, celebrated by the same illustrious beings, according to the prophetic account given of this wonderful event in the sixty-eighth psalm; an account expressly applied to it by the apostle Paul in the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Ephesians. "The chariots of God are twenty-thousand; even thousands of angels. The Lord is among them, as in Sinai; as in the holy place." The very hymn which they sung seems to be transmitted to us in the following words, "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also; that the Lord God might dwell among them."

The manner in which holiness and salvation are to be obtained is everywhere taught in the gospel. The truth of God, in the hands of the divine Spirit, is the great instrument by which we are "made free from the bondage of corruption." "Faith," we know, "cometh by hearing, and

hearing, by the word of God." This word is therefore to be faithfully explained and enforced by the preacher, and faithfully received by those who hear him. The prayers and the praises of every religious assembly are to spring from the heart, and are to ascend up before the throne of infinite mercy, with dependence, with confidence, with love, with reverence, with gratitude, with hope, and with joy. Our prayers and our praises are also to be presented in the name of Christ, as the great and glorious "propitiation for the sins of men," and the "true and living way of access to God." They are to be presented with faith in his name; that faith which occupies the whole heart, and alone interests us in the blessings of redemption.

Christians, at the same time, are to unite in the administration and celebration of the evangelical ordinances, baptism and the Lord's supper; and are thus in a peculiar and most affecting manner to commemorate the glory of Christ, manifested in the wonderful work of the new creation.

All these things are to be done "decently, and in order." At the same time, they are to be performed with plainness, simplicity, and no unnecessary rites. The Jewish worship, by its ceremonious magnificence, was particularly impressive to the imagination, during the early periods of society. To this end it was perfectly fitted. All its services were calculated to affect the senses in the deepest manner, and to find through them access to the heart. The gospel, on the contrary, is addressed directly to the understanding; and makes its way to the heart by means of the power of conscience. Unnecessary rites are here both

useless and noxious ; since they allure the thoughts away from the doctrines and precepts which are inculcated, to the ceremonies by which they are surrounded. In this manner, the spiritual worship of the gospel is ever in danger of becoming a mere “bodily exercise,” unprofitable in itself, and destructive of piety. The ceremonies of the Romish church exterminated its devotion, and became extensively the cause as well as the effect of that corruption, which by men of real religion has been justly regarded as a prodigy.

On this holy day also we are bound to perform the various private duties of religion.

The worship of the family, and that of the closet, are the duty of all families, and of all individuals, every day they live. Equally is it the duty of all men to spend a part of every day in self-examination, in religious meditation, and in contemplation on the perfections and works of God, on the character of Christ, and the wonders of redemption. But it is particularly so on the Sabbath, as affording more leisure for this purpose. Then the scriptures especially, and other religious books generally, are to be read and meditated upon. Efforts for the good of the soul, and victory over sin and temptation, are to be planned, resolved on, and achieved. We are to humble ourselves before God, to devote ourselves anew to his service, to cherish the duties of religion, and universally to cultivate the christian character.

At the same time, children and servants are to be carefully instructed in the great and plain doctrines and duties of religion, to be restrained, in the same manner as ourselves, from all worldly

pursuits, and to be presented by us with such persuasive examples of piety, as may engage them to reverence and embrace the gospel.

Universally, our time, our thoughts, our conversation, and our actions are all to be devoted to God. This, indeed, is in a sense true of every day. But on other days it is our duty to labour in our worldly business; and, while our thoughts are engaged by pursuits of this nature, it is impossible that they should be also engaged by religious subjects, with sufficient intensesness and constancy to fulfil all the demands, either of our interest, or of our duty. On the sabbath we are withdrawn from all worldly pursuits. A solemn pause is made in the business of life. A happy season of leisure is furnished to us for obtaining our salvation. Then no worldly business is to intrude, no worldly pleasure to solicit, no worldly thought to interfere. The holy nature of the day, and the peculiarly solemn nature of its services, conspire with eminent felicity to render all the duties which have been specified easy, undisturbed, solemn, impressive, and profitable. This, then, is to be carefully seized, and anxiously husbanded, as a golden opportunity for performing them all.

3. The sabbath is to be employed, so far as circumstances demand, in performing works of necessity and mercy.

Our authority for this assertion is complete in the declaration of God, "I will have mercy, and not sacrifice." In the illustration of this precept by our Saviour, and in his example, it is equally complete. What these works are, beyond the direct import of this example, we are to judge as carefully and conscientiously as we can. Generally,

it is to be observed, that as little of our time as the nature of the case demands is to be employed in these works, and the remainder to be devoted to those duties of religion, which were the original objects of the sabbath. Wherever the time required is so great as to be disproportioned to the value of the necessity in question, it is to be given up. That necessary work which requires but a moment may be lawful, when it would become unlawful if it required an hour. All works, both of necessity and mercy, are to be regarded as duties, which we are bound to perform, and never as indulgences, which we are permitted to take.

II. I shall now attempt to show that the duties of the sabbath are all binding upon us.

On this subject I observe,

1. That the example of God, in resting from his work of creation, is authoritatively binding upon us; and requires us to rest from our own lawful labours in a similar manner.

2. The fourth command, which has, I trust, been shown to be equally obligatory on all men, requires the same rest from us, which it required from the Israelites.

3. The original institution, the examples of God the Father, and the Son, and the injunctions of the fourth command, require in substance all these duties. The duties which they expressly require cannot be performed to any valuable purpose, unless all the duties specified in this chapter are also performed. The true meaning and real extent of these examples and injunctions, as they respected the Jews, are explained in the comments of the prophets, particularly of the prophet Isaiah, concerning this subject. The text is the most copious

and definite exhibition of this nature contained in the scriptures. In chapter lvi. of the same prophet, is found also a comprehensive account of the same duties ; and we have several other less particular and less impressive explanations in other passages of the scriptures. These injunctions and examples then demanded, in the view of the spirit of inspiration, all these duties of the Israelites. Of course, this was the true tenour of these examples and injunctions. But, if I mistake not, I have proved both to be no less obligatory on christians, than on the Israelites.. The same examples and injunctions have therefore the same tenour with respect to us, and bind us to exactly the same duties.

4. The new testament has nowhere dispensed with any part of these duties.

It has been often thought, that Christ has released his followers from some part of the duties of the sabbath, and in some degree from that strictness in observing it, which were originally required of the Jews. Observations to this amount I have not unfrequently seen and heard ; but, exclusively of the things observed by Dr. Paley, and mentioned in the last chapter, I have never been informed of the particulars from which christians are thus supposed to have been released ; nor do I know in what passages of the new testament they are supposed to be contained. Dr. Paley believes, that the sabbath was never at all obligatory on christians. According to this scheme, therefore, it was impossible for Christ to release them from these duties ; because they were never incumbent on them. Where those who make this supposition find their warrant for it in the discourses

of Christ, or of his apostles, I confess myself unable to determine. The observations which our Saviour makes, as an exposition of several parts of the decalogue, in his sermon on the mount, he prefaces with these remarkable declarations ; “ Think not, that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets : I am not come to destroy but to fulfil : for verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” After these declarations, it is impossible that Christ should be rationally believed to have altered at all the duties of the sabbath, much less to have annihilated it, unless he has done it somewhere in plain, unequivocal language. But no such language on this subject can be found in the new testament. Until something of this nature shall be definitely pointed out, the duties of the sabbath must be acknowledged to have been left by Christ and his apostles exactly as they found them ; and all declarations to the contrary must be regarded as merely gratuitous and presumptive.

5. As the religious privileges of christians are declared to be superior to those of the Jews, they cannot be supposed to be lessened with respect to the sabbath, unless this fact is directly asserted.

If the duties of christians on the sabbath are lessened, either in number or degree, then their religious privileges are rendered just so far inferior to those of the Jews. The duties of the sabbath are all privileges of a high and glorious nature, and cannot fail to be accounted such by every good man. I speak not here of the regulations of the civil laws of the Jews ; these have nothing to do with the subject of the present discussion. I

speak of the sabbath, as instituted on the seventh day ; as instituted immediately after the creation was finished ; as enjoined anew in the fourth command of the decalogue ; and as explained and enforced by the prophets, particularly by Isaiah. It was a high religious privilege to a Jew to have one whole day in seven divinely consecrated to the duties of religion ; to be required to “ esteem the sabbath a delight, and the holy of the Lord honourable ; and to turn away his foot from finding his own pleasure ” on that sacred day. It was a combination of glorious privileges to a Jew, “ to keep the sabbath from polluting it—to join himself on that day to the Lord ; to be his servant—to take hold of his covenant—to be brought to the holy mountain of God—to be made joyful in his house of prayer—to delight himself in the Lord,” and to find his various solemn services accepted by his Creator. But if these duties, or any of them, be lessened in number or degree, just so far are the privileges of a christian inferior to those of a Jew. Which of these privileges would a christian be willing to give up ? Which of them does the gospel require him to relinquish ?

I shall conclude this chapter with a summary enumeration of several motives, which strongly solicit our exact observance of the sabbath.

1. Such an observance of the sabbath is required by the command of God.

2. It is enforced by the divine example.

God rested on the seventh day, the day after the creation was ended. This example of Jehovah is of infinite authority ; and enjoins, in the most expressive language, the faithful imitation of all mankind.

3. The nature of the duties, enjoined upon the sabbath, demands of us such an observance.

The duties of the sabbath are all of a religious and holy nature. Such duties can never be successfully or profitably performed on that day, when mingled with secular business or amusements. These will both distract the attention of the mind, and withdraw it from that clear, strong, affecting sense of spiritual and divine objects, in which the peculiar benefit of the sabbath is found. The soul, in this case, will be divided between God and mammon, between the love of the world and the love of God. The consequence cannot but be foreseen. The world will predominate ; God will be forgotten ; and dishonoured, if not forgotten ; the soul will cease from a heavenly character, debase its pure and exalted affections, lose those refined and noble views of celestial objects, which are fitted both to inspire and to cherish devotion, cease to stretch its wings towards heaven, and fall down to earth, loaded with a burden of gross cares, and dragged to the ground by an encumbering mass of sensual gratification.

At the same time, it is far easier to observe the sabbath wholly than to observe it in part. He, who intends to divide it between earthly and spiritual pursuits, will never know where to draw the line of division. Perpetually will he find himself wandering, now towards religion, and now towards the world ; while his conscience will be unceasingly embarrassed by fears, that he has neglected his duty, and by doubts concerning what it is. There is no such thing as a half-way performance of our duty. If such a performance had in fact been required, or allowed, we should have

been distressed by unceasing perplexity. Happy is it for us, that an ordinance of this nature cannot be found in the scriptures.

4. The blessing of the sabbath is promised to such an observance.

The text is an illustrious proof of this. "If thou do all the things" (required in the first verse) says God, "then shalt thou delight thyself in Jehovah; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth." Not, if thou do a part of these things. There is no promise to a divided service; there is no blessing connected with it. He, therefore, who wishes for the blessing of God upon his religious labours, must look for it only in the strict and faithful observance of the duties which he has required.

5. It is demanded by our own highest interest.

The sabbath is eminently "the day of salvation." "On Zion the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." On that holy day, and in the holy place, this incomprehensible blessing is still to be found. Where that day is not observed, and that place is not frequented, this blessing ceases to descend. If we love ourselves, then; if we love our families; if we love our country; if we love mankind; we shall exert ourselves to the utmost to uphold the sabbath in its purity, in our hearts, in our conversation, and in our conduct. We shall "keep the sabbath from polluting it;" shall observe it with the most faithful exactness; and, by precept and example, solemnly recommend it to the exact observance of others.

CHAP. V.

Reflections on the Sabbath.

1. THE first consideration which strikes the mind, when contemplating the sabbath, is the preeminent wisdom of this divine institution.

Wisdom, as applied to conduct, denotes the choice of desirable ends, and the selection of happy means for their accomplishment. The ends aimed at in the institution of the sabbath are numerous, and all of them eminently desirable. The means by which they are accomplished are, at the same time, eminently happy. The sabbath, and the things immediately connected with it, are the amount of them all.

Among these ends let me remark, since God himself has been pleased to mention it, and to mention it in the fourth command of the decalogue, the provision which this holy day furnishes of a season of rest to labouring animals.

“A righteous man regards the life of his beast,” says the wisest of all men. (Prov. xii. 10.) In this fact we behold a strong resemblance of a righteous man to his Creator. The goodness of this glorious Being is forcibly displayed in the provision which he has made for the rest and comfort of labouring animals in the moral law. In the hands even of prudent and humane masters, it is clearly seen, that such animals are sufficiently employed when they labour six days of the week, and are released to rest and refreshment on the seventh. God, who perfectly knew what their strength was able to bear, and who

perfectly foresaw how greatly they would be oppressed by avarice and cruelty, was pleased in this solemn manner, and at this early period, to provide for their relief, by securing to them the quiet and restoration of one day in seven. In this merciful provision the divine tenderness is displayed in a most amiable and edifying manner. The humble character of even these beings did not place them below the compassionate care of God. Elsewhere he has commanded us to supply them with food: here he has commanded us to furnish them with rest. In both cases he has taught us, that "the Lord is good" and kind "to all;" and that "his tender mercies are over all the works of his hands." This indulgence to animals is enjoined with infinite authority; and secured by the same sanction which enforces justice and beneficence towards mankind. By bringing up this subject also in form, thus solemnly, regularly, and often, he has formed our regard towards these creatures into a habit; and prevented us from the possibility of being inattentive to this duty.

In the same manner are rest and refreshment secured to mankind. Children and servants particularly are by this institution preserved from the oppression of severe masters, and the unfeeling demands of unnatural parents. Every industrious man will tell you, from his own experience, that the season of labour is sufficiently long, and this return of rest absolutely necessary for the preservation of health, and strength, and life; that greater toil would fatigue the bodily powers into decay; and that the weekly cessation from business is not more frequent than our worldly interests clearly demand. Hence, unless when

under the dominion of avarice, he will consider the sabbath as a benevolent provision for his true worldly interest. What will thus be approved by the man, who labours voluntarily and for himself, cannot fail to be cordially welcomed by him, who is compelled, through indigence, to toil for others; the servant drudging for a hard master, and the child trembling under the rod of an unfeeling parent.

Nor is the general tendency of the sabbath less visible in the promotion of neatness and cleanliness, especially among the inferior classes of mankind. No person is willing to appear in a religious assembly, unless cleanly and decently dressed; so true is this, that probably in all countries where the sabbath is observed, every one, not prevented by absolute poverty, has what is proverbially called a Sunday suit of clothes. The spirit of cleanliness and decency is always thus awakened by the return of this holy day. Excited every week, it is of course excited through the week, becomes an immovable habit, extends its influence through all the concerns of human life, and in the end constitutes the standing character. Individuals are thus prevented from becoming brutes in their appearance; and a nation is fashioned into an entire and delightful contrast to the native dirt and slovenliness of man, always exhibited in so humiliating a manner by savages. The influence of this single fact on the comfort of human life cannot be calculated.

Inseparably connected with this article is the general tendency of the observance of the sabbath to promote decency of conduct and civility of manners. Every thing pertaining to the sabbath

generates, of course, this desirable conduct. The neatness of dress and the decency of appearance, just mentioned, strongly persuade to it. The association in our thoughts between the dress and the manners (both of which are intended to make us appear with advantage) is instinctive, and inseparable. Every thing connected with the sabbath also inspires such views and affections as contribute to the manners in question. We are, of course, united to a respectable assembly, on a sacred day, in a sacred place, upon a most affecting occasion, and for ends the most solemn and important in the universe. We are immediately before God, and are employed in his worship; in confessing our sins, in seeking the forgiveness of them, and in labouring to obtain an interest in his favour. We are here taught to feel our needy, frail, guilty, dependent character; to see how little and insignificant we are; how unbecoming are pride, unkindness, and insolence; how becoming humility, modesty, condescension, and gentleness are; how amiable, in the sight of God, is "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit;" and how necessary, for every purpose for which we have assembled, the establishment of these things in our hearts. These considerations powerfully tend to promote, in every man who is not void of all propensity to that which is good, both gentleness of mind, and sweetness of manners.

I have already glanced at the tendency of the sabbath to abase our pride, and to remove our native ruggedness of disposition. This part of the subject deserves a further consideration. One of the chief deformities of character in the rich,

the learned, and the great, is that haughtiness of mind, which, on account of their peculiar advantages, they are ever ready to feel; and one of the chief causes of suffering to the poor, the ignorant, and the powerless, is that insolence of behaviour, which from this haughtiness they are compelled to endure. But when the superior classes of mankind assemble in the house of God, they are there taught to sink at once, even in their own eyes, if they open them, down to the same level with their fellow-worms. In the presence of Him, "before whom all nations are as nothing," the glare of splendour, the pride of wealth, the self-sufficiency of learning, and the loftiness of power, are annihilated in a moment. Those, who a little while before felt themselves to be rich, and wise, and great, find that they are poor, ignorant, little, guilty, odious to God, exposed to his wrath, and hopeless, except in the mere character of suppliants for mercy.

When a great man in the sanctuary looks around him on a mixed assembly of his equals and inferiors, he will be taught to feel that some of his poor neighbours are, in all probability, more excellent, more lovely, and in every sense greater, "in the sight of the Highest," than himself. Nothing can humble pride more than the elevation above itself of those whom it despises. This elevation of the humble, this useful depression of the haughty, is nowhere so well taught as in the house of God.

Here, as will be inferred from what has been already said, the poor and lowly rise of course above their usual level. "The rich and the poor," says Solomon, "meet together; the Lord is the

Maker of them all." In the house of God they "meet together" in a manner wholly peculiar, are placed exactly on the same level, and are more strongly than anywhere else reminded, that "the Lord is the Maker of them all." Here they assemble as creatures of the same God merely. Here all their earthly distinctions vanish; and a new distinction, formed only of sin and holiness, commences; which, unless terminated in the present world, will endure and widen for ever. Here then the poor man rises to his proper independence and distinction; forgets the depression of his circumstances; and, without the aid of pride, assumes an elevation of character not less necessary to him for the faithful discharge of his duty, than the humility of the gospel to the lofty minded. Thus the sabbath, like its Author, "putteth down the mighty from their seats," and "exalteth them of low degree." How perfect in this important particular is an institution, which produces these opposite and indispensable benefits in those whose situation so plainly and loudly demands them!

Another immense benefit of the sabbath is the instruction which it furnishes in morals and religion.

The value of knowledge is admitted by all civilized men. It will usually, and ought ever to be admitted also, that moral and religious knowledge is of far more value than any other. It is more necessary, more practical, more useful, more enlarging to the mind, more refined, and more exalted. The least acquaintance with the subject will place this assertion beyond a doubt.

As the knowledge itself is more valuable, so the sabbath furnishes means for obtaining it, which are far cheaper, and far more efficacious, than were ever furnished by any other institution. Here, on a day devoted to no employment but the gaining of this knowledge, and the performance of those religious duties which unite with it in perfect harmony; in a place convenient and sacred; on an occasion infinitely important; and with the strong power of sympathy to aid and impress; a thousand persons are taught the best of all knowledge; the most useful to themselves, and the most beneficial to mankind; for a less sum than must be expended by a twentieth part of their number, in order to obtain the same instruction in any other science. No device of the heathen philosophers, or of modern infidels, greatly as they have boasted of their wisdom, can be compared, as to its usefulness, with this.

The sabbath, particularly, is the *only mean ever devised of communicating important instruction to the great mass of mankind.*

On this day all may assemble, all may learn, from the prince to the beggar, from the man of gray hairs to the infant of days. Had the sabbath been a device of man, men would be able to boast of immensely greater ingenuity and wisdom than they have hitherto displayed; and would be justly pronounced to have formed a more successful and more patriotic institution for the benefit of mankind, than any which is found on the page of history. Here a real and glorious equality of privileges is established, not only without confusion and discord, but with strong enforcements of

peace and good order. In these great blessings all are here alike interested, and all may alike partake.

To the blessings of peace and good order universally, the sabbath contributes also in a pre-eminent degree. Moral and religious knowledge is the knowledge of our duty, and of the rewards which God will give to such as perform it. To this knowledge, the sabbath adds the highest motives to the performance, which are found in the universe. All good, internal and external, in time and eternity, allures to it, as a direct and certain reward. All evil compels to it as a threatening, and deters from the omission as a punishment inevitable and endless. This knowledge, and these motives, the sabbath furnishes, with a solemnity and force altogether unrivalled. From the house of God they are likely to be carried with us into every concern of life, where duty is to be performed; and duty is to be performed in every concern. With the influence of the sabbath on his mind, man everywhere feels himself accountable to his Maker; and in darkness and solitude, in the secrecy of thought, as well as in the conduct inspected by the public eye, realizes the truth, that the all-searching God is a constant witness of whatever he thinks, speaks, or does. While, at the same time, the peace and good order of religious assemblies on the sabbath furnish the highest specimen of decorum that was ever seen in the present world. Fifty-two sabbaths every year is this conduct repeated. Hence, it becomes a powerful as well as desirable habit; and clings to him, who steadily visits the house of God through the remainder of every week. In this manner it is

diffused through the life; and influences the thoughts, words, and actions, towards men of every class and character. The magistrate and the subject, the parent and the child, the master and the servant, the friend and the neighbour, are benefited by it alike. All of them acquire more peaceful dispositions, exhibit a more amiable deportment, pursue a more orderly conduct, and fill their respective stations with greater propriety than either would do under the influence of every other cause, except the immediate agency of God.

It will not be denied, that each of the things which I have specified is an important benefit to mankind, nor that all of them united are of advantage inestimable. But the sabbath has blessings to give of a still higher nature. Among them this is one of supreme moment, that the sabbath is the great means of preserving in the world the knowledge and the worship of the one living and true God. Wherever the sabbath is not, there is no worship, no religion. Man forgets God, and God forsakes man. The moral world becomes a desert, where life never springs, and beauty never smiles. The beams of the Sun of righteousness never dawn upon the miserable waste; the rains of heaven never descend.

But, "thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift!" the sabbath, "according to his abundant mercy," returns at the close of every week to shine upon us with its peaceful and benevolent beams. At the close of every week, with "a still, small voice," it summons us to the house of God. Here, we meet, and find, and

know, and serve our glorious and blessed Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. Here, on the mercy-seat, he sits enthroned, to hear our complaints and petitions, to receive our praises, to accept our repentance, and to forgive our sins for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here he makes known his pleasure and our duty. Here he promises to those who obey, divine and eternal rewards; and threatens those who disobey with terrible and never-ending punishments. Seen every week in these awful and amiable characters, God cannot be unknown nor forgotten. Accordingly, throughout the ages of christianity, his presence and agency are understood everywhere, and by every person who frequents the house of God. The little child is as familiarly acquainted with them as the man of gray hairs; the peasant as the monarch. "All," in this sense, "know God, from the least to the greatest;" and there is "no occasion for a man to say to his neighbour, Know the Lord."

Intimately connected with this vast and interesting subject, and in an important sense the effect of the sabbath only, is the attainment of holiness and salvation.

Man, an apostate, guilty and condemned, infinitely needs a renovation of his character, a reversal of his sentence, an escape from his punishment, and a reinstatement in the glorious privileges from which he has fallen. To accomplish these inestimable and benevolent ends, God, according to the declaration in *Exod. xx. 11*, has hallowed and blessed the sabbath. Through every age and through every land, where the sabbath has been kept holy unto the Lord, this blessing

has regularly and uninterruptedly descended. There the glad tidings of salvation have been published and received. There men have sought and found Jehovah, their God, repented of their sins, believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, renewed their allegiance to their rightful sovereign, obtained the pardon of their sins and the justification of their souls, triumphed over death and the grave, ascended to heaven, and begun the possession of everlasting joy. "Wherever even two or three have met together in the name of Christ, there he has been in the midst of them, and blessed them," with his peculiar blessing. This holy, heavenly season has regularly opened the correspondence between this miserable world and the world of life and glory, and preserved the connection between God and men. To it earth owes its chief blessings, and heaven no small part of its inhabitants, and of its unfading joys.

But where mankind have "forsaken the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is," all these blessings have ceased. "The fruitful land has been converted into marshes and miry places, which could not be healed, and were therefore given to salt." In such places the world, and sin, and Satan take entire possession of the heart, and leave no room for God. All the thoughts and desires are the offspring of "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." Like Ahab, men "sell themselves to work wickedness:" like Jeroboam, they sin, and make all around them to sin. There no prayers ascend to heaven, no voice of mercy is heard from that happy world, inviting sinners to faith and repentance in the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is neither sought nor found. None ask for mercy, and none receive it. None knock at the door of life, and to none is it opened. All enter "into the broad and crooked road," and "go down to the chambers of death;" while God with an awful voice proclaims concerning them, "Ephraim is joined to idols : let him alone."

Pause now for a moment, and recollect the number, the greatness, the glory, of these ends ; and tell me if the institution, which unites and accomplishes them all in perfect harmony, is not supremely wise and worthy of God. How easily does it accomplish them, how perfectly, how wonderfully ! How happy is the frequent, convenient, necessary return of this holy day ! After how desirable intervals, with what useful regularity, with what sweet serenity ! How necessary is it to the sinner, to call him off from the world, from stupidity, from sottishness ! How necessary to awaken his attention to God, to holiness, and to heaven ; to engage his thoughts on spiritual and divine objects, to begin his repentance, faith, and love, and to place his feet in the path which leads to immortal life ! How necessary to the saint, to rouse him from sloth, to recall him from sin ; to remind him of his duty, to increase his faith and holiness, and to help him forward in his journey towards heaven ! How necessary to Adam in his innocence ; how infinitely necessary to all his ruined offspring ! In a word, how plainly has the sabbath been blessed, as well as hallowed. Blessed from the beginning to the present time, blessed in a multitude of particulars, blessed in every land where it has been known, with the immediate and peculiar favour of God,

with the nearest resemblance to the blessings of immortality.

2. The mind of a good man cannot fail also to be deeply affected with the solemnity of this institution.

When God had ended the glorious work of creation, "he rested the seventh day from all the work which he had made." The creation was now fresh from the forming hand of Jehovah. The great architect had "builded his stories in the heaven; had numbered the stars, and called them all by their names; had appointed the moon for seasons, and caused the sun to know his going down." He had filled the world with beauty and fragrance, with glory and grandeur, with life and immortality. In the full view of this transporting, this amazing scene, in the strong apprehension of the infinite perfections which it unfolded, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy:" while the Author of all things beheld the works which his hands had made, and pronounced them "very good." The praise begun by angels, our first parents reiterated on the first morning of their existence, and made their delightful residence vocal with hymns to their Creator. The first employment of paradise, the first work done by man, was the worship of God. Thus the dawn of human existence was opened by the same divine employment, which will unceasingly occupy the everlasting day of heaven.

When the command to "remember" this day was given, there were "in the morning thunders and lightnings; and a thick cloud" upon Mount Sinai, and "the voice of the trumpet exceeding

loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke; because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace; and the whole mount quaked greatly." In the midst of this amazing grandeur, in the midst of these awful terrors, God with his own voice spoke this command, and wrote it with his own finger. With this example and with these solemnities was one day in seven consecrated to Jehovah.

On the first day of the week Christ arose from the dead to endless life and glory, and "became the first fruits of them that slept," and their forerunner into the heavens. On this divine occasion, the same exalted beings, who sang together when the heavens and the earth were made, and proclaimed "glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men," when the Saviour of the world was born, now renewed their songs, and entered with Christ into the highest heavens, with all the pomp and splendour which invested Sinai at the promulgation of the law.

On this day the Spirit of grace and truth descended upon the apostles of our Lord and Saviour; baptized them with fire, endued them with inspiration, the gift of tongues, and the spirit of prophecy; gave them to understand the gospel in its glorious mysteries, and enabled them, with wonderful miracles, to prove its divine origin, and thus to erect the spiritual kingdom of God in the world.

All these examples, the most august, the most amazing which the universe ever beheld, leave their whole weight, their infinite authority, upon

this institution. Every christian, therefore, while he keeps the sabbath holy unto God, ought, in order to quicken himself in his duty, to remember, that on this sacred day God rested ; that his Redeemer rested ; that the Spirit of Grace descended ; and that angels repeatedly united together in enraptured praise. Nor ought he, in any wise, to forget, that no institution can plead so many and so great things done to solemnize and consecrate it as holy unto God, and as indispensably binding upon man.

3. We learn from the observations already made, with what emotions the sabbath ought to be regarded by us.

We assemble in the house of God, to glorify him in the religious worship which he has appointed, to seek the everlasting life of our own souls, to obtain and increase holiness in our hearts, to remember, admire, and celebrate the wonderful works of the old and new creations, and the glorious perfections of the Creator and Redeemer. What emotions ought we to feel while engaged in this divine employment ? Such unquestionably as angels experienced, when these works were done, and these perfections were displayed.

Particularly, the sabbath demands of all men profound reverence and solemn awe. All the things, which have been mentioned, are supremely great, sublime, and wonderful. The most awful of all beings is brought near to our hearts, and presents himself before our eyes, in manifestations of a most majestic and astonishing nature. Had we been present at the work of creation, and heard the awful command, which

brought into being the immense mass of original elements ; had we seen the light, at the bidding of the great Creator, disclose and involve the formless confusion ; the sea and the dry land separate ; the grass, the herbs, and the trees instantaneously arise, and clothe the earth in one universal robe of life and beauty ; the sun, the moon, and the stars lighted up in the heavens ; the various animals filling the world with living beings ; and man, the lord, the crown, and the glory of the whole, formed a rational and immortal being, to understand, enjoy, and celebrate, the divine work ; could we have failed to experience the most profound awe, amid this complication of infinite wonders, and to glorify the great Author of them with that " fear of the Lord," which is " the beginning of wisdom ?"

Had we again been present at the crucifixion of our divine Redeemer, and beheld the earth tremble, the rocks rend, the veil of the temple part asunder, the graves open, the saints arise, and the sun hide his face in darkness ; had we accompanied his body to the tomb, and watched the descent of the angel, the convulsions of the second earthquake, the lightnings which streamed from his countenance, and the swooning of the guards who kept the sepulchre ; had we seen our Lord resume his body, come forth from the grave to his doubting, trembling disciples ; had we seen him rise from the earth, enter the bosom of the cloud of glory, and, with a solemn and magnificent progress, ascend to the heavens ; must not the same awful emotions have been instinctively renewed

But all these things, this sacred day, this divine festival places before our eyes. If, at the same time, we further remember, that we are in the house of God ; that hither he comes to meet us on designs of infinite love, to forgive our sins, to renew, receive, and save our souls ; that we stand before him as sinners, as apostates, condemned, ruined, helpless, and in ourselves hopeless also ; that we are suppliants for mere mercy, dependent on the obedience of another, and without any righteousness of our own ; must we not feel our littleness and our guilt ? Must we not, instinctively, “ lay our hands on our mouths, and our mouths in the dust, and cry, Unclean ? ” Can we fail to fear “ that glorious and fearful name, Jehovah, our God ? ”

This emotion every thing in the scriptures conspires to improve and strengthen. The law of God, with all its commands, promises, and threatenings, its divine rewards and amazing penalties ; the gospel, with its solemn establishments of the law, its remedies for the imperfections of the law, as the means of life for sinners, its glorious invitations, supreme allurements, and heavenly promises ; conspire with infinite force to persuade us to “ fear the Lord our God,” and to “ tremble at his word.” He, who is thoughtless and irreverent here, ought to have considered how he would have felt amid the thunders, the lightnings, the earthquake, the sound of the trumpet, and the flame of devouring fire, from which the Creator said, “ Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.” To this man, more than to almost any other sinner, is addressed that humbling rebuke,

“The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider.”

At the same time, the sabbath is to be regarded with peculiar joy.

All things relating to the sabbath are not only solemn, but joyful things. At the creation, a new universe started up into being; and life, reason, virtue, and immortality, were given to an endless multitude of creatures. At the completion of the work of redemption by the resurrection of Christ, an endless multitude of perishing sinners were recalled from the melancholy regions of death and depravity to immortal holiness, life, and glory. On these stupendous occasions “all the sons of God shouted for joy.” We are still more interested in the last of them than they could be; for we are the miserable beings who are redeemed and saved. On the sabbath, the great body of the church has been brought into the kingdom of grace and prepared for the kingdom of glory. On the first sabbath, upon which began the great work of erecting the kingdom of Christ in the world by the apostles, three thousand souls were added unto the Lord. On the first sabbath the apostles were “baptized with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,” and divinely empowered to spread salvation through the world. On the sabbath the souls of men have ever since been flocking into the kingdom of Christ, and taking possession of immortality. The sabbath has been the great means of preserving that kingdom. To the sabbath it is owing, that the glad tidings of salvation are now heard in this desolate world. To the sabbath it is

owing, that in this land, through the churches of God is weekly resounded the music of heaven, and the proclamation of life eternal to mankind. The sabbath is appropriately "the accepted time;" it is eminently "the day of salvation." On the sabbath all christian assemblies meet to offer up their humble prayers; to send up their hymns of praise to their "Father who is in heaven;" to teach, and receive, "the words of eternal life;" to be baptized into the "name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;" and to receive the body and blood of their crucified Redeemer. On the sabbath the christian world bears, in this manner, no unhappy resemblance of heaven; and a little part of the melancholy hours of time become a fair image of the pure and never-ending sabbath beyond the grave.

With these delightful things in view, can we fail to unite with "the church of the first-born," and "the innumerable company of angels," and repeat and respond their divine exultation? Shall not our songs bear an humble unison with theirs? Shall not the joy which they feel on the great business of the day, the repentance and return of sinners, find a welcome admission to our hearts? Shall we not "rejoice in Him that made us?" Shall not "the children of Zion be joyful in their King?"

God on this day rejoiced over the creation which his hands had made. Angels rejoiced in the wonders of the work, and in the divine Creator. Christ rejoiced over the church, which he redeemed with his own blood. Heaven has rejoiced at every return of this delightful season, and

renewed its transports over all the sons of Adam, whom this day has with divine efficacy raised from death to life. "The Lord God is" now our "sun and our shield." Now "he gives grace and glory." This day "he withholds no good thing from them that walk uprightly." Let mortals behold these things with wonder and gratulation, and anticipate the pure and permanent transports of the everlasting sabbath in the heavens.

Nor is this holy day to be less regarded with gratitude.

All the benevolent things which God has done for us this day brings before our eyes. Our being, our daily blessings, our redemption, our salvation, the resumed character of holiness, the title to endless life, the final escape from sin and misery, this heavenly season proclaims with an unceasing voice. At this season, God comes down to dwell among men, divested, with respect to all who are willing to receive him, of the awful frowns of an offended judge, clothed with the smiles of an eternal benefactor, and adorned with the endearing titles of the Father, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier of man. Here the calls to gratitude are all united. The blessings of earth and heaven, of time and eternity, here invite us to love and praise the Author of all our mercies. Can we fail to "render to Him according to his benefits?" Can we fail this day to ascribe "blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, to Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever and ever?"

4. How ought the christian church to bless God for this institution?

To this institution, as a means of grace, we owe by far the greater part of the spiritual blessings which we enjoy, and, in a high sense, we owe them all. But for this day, we should neither have sought nor secured eternal life; for where no sabbath is, there is no religion. But for this day, earthly things would have engrossed all our thoughts. Honour, wealth, and pleasure are the real sirens, which charm mankind to shipwreck and death. To their songs the ear of man is by nature attuned, and the heart beats in regular response. But for this day, the world, as a canker, would rust, corrupt, and consume all the disposition to piety, and all the hopes of heaven. The soul would be benumbed. Religion would die. God would be forgotten. Mankind would cease to be saved; and heaven would fail of her destined inhabitants. How desolate the prospect! How strongly would this world resemble the regions of final despair; where no sabbath dawns, where no prayers nor praises ascend, no sermons proclaim pardon and peace to sinners, the voice of mercy never sounds, and the smiles of forgiving, redeeming, and sanctifying love never illumine the dreary valley of the shadow of death!

All things pertaining to salvation are social things; things of general participation and powerful sympathy. They exist chiefly in multitudes. Without the sabbath, there is no reason to believe that they could exist at all. Not where one is employed in religious worship merely, nor principally; but where "two or three are met together in the name of Christ," is his presence

promised. Not on the closet, the recess, or the solitude, but “on Zion, whither the tribes go up, has the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.”

5. What an illustrious type is the sabbath of the everlasting rest enjoyed by the children of God!

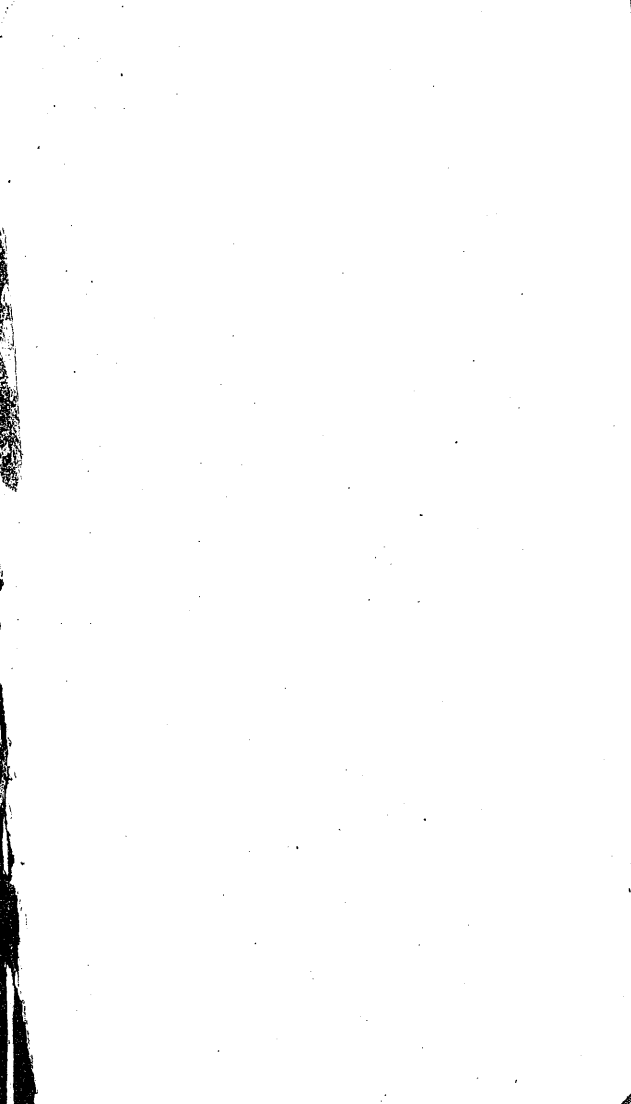
The sabbath is a rest from sin, business, and pleasure; a day in which God is worshipped, divine knowledge improved, and holiness attained and increased; a day in which saints delightfully commune, and joyfully celebrate the wonders of creation, and the sublimer wonders of redemption. On the sabbath, God is peculiarly present, reconciled, forgiving, and sanctifying; and the Spirit of truth eminently communicates comfortable evidence of divine love, whispers peace, and inspires joy. The sabbath is, therefore, the day of hope and consolation, of enjoyment and triumph; the foretaste of heaven; the entrance to the glorious assembly of the blessed.

The future rest of the children of God is divinely formed of these delightful ingredients. Here eternal peace begins its undisturbed reign over all the great kingdom of Jehovah. Here immortal minds are consummated in that holiness, which is the image of the heavenly Adam. Here those minds, in the exercise of that holiness, with exalted friendship, and pure unbosomed intercourse, commence their everlasting joy. Here “God is all in all.” Here he unveils his face, and discloses the smiles of infinite love to the assembly of the first-born. And here, “the Lamb, the glory of God,” and “the light” of heaven, illumines all their thoughts, quickens all

their affections, “ feeds them with living bread, leads them to fountains of living waters,” and awakens into transport their hymns of never-ending praise.

[N. B. This Work was originally published in five Sermons: in adapting it to the form of a Treatise, a few expressions have been altered, and a few omissions made.]

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